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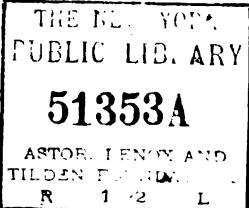
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JULY, 1878.

MARTINDALE'S MONEY.

A NOVEL.

By the Author of "Old as the Hills," "Kate Savage," &c., &c.

CHAPTER XI.

A GARDEN SCENE.

THE members of the Constitutional League had reached their homes again in the humbler districts of Hexbury City. The small shopkeeper doffed his glossy coat, and enjoyed a reaction in the form of shirt sleeves and a long clay pipe, in the seclusion of his own back parlour. The mechanic, satisfied that he and his kind constituted the backbone of the nation, went forth again to finish the evening in the club-room of an adjacent public-house, whilst the wives stayed at home to put the families to bed with many scoldings; for a day's pleasure, and the inevitable injury to best clothes, are apt to beget irritability in the temper of the thrifty housewife.

In the meantime, two persons, who had watched the procession of the League along the dusty road, still lingered by Dr. Singleton's gate. The quiet stars appeared thick and fast in the great vault above them; the gentle breeze of the summer night came over the heath and was welcome after the long, hot day.

"Listen," said Jim to his companion, as an unusual sound was borne towards them on the evening air, "they have kept the band to play whilst they eat their dinners."

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"I wish we could hear what they are playing," said Grace.

"Let us go nearer," suggested the young fellow. "You needn't be afraid," he added, as his companion glanced back towards the house, "the doctor has only just commenced his forty winks."

The window of the sitting-room was open, and within appeared the master of the house reposing in his easy chair, with folded hands, sleeping the sleep of the elderly. Grace hesitated.

"It is a lovely night," urged Jim, "do come; we don't often get the chance of good music in this part of the world."

"You are reversing the primeval order of things," said Grace, "why do you persuade me?" but the matter hardly seemed worth an argument, and she yielded even as she spoke.

They crossed the road and began to stroll over the soft turf in the direction of the park, a portion of which skirted the heath from which it was separated by low wooden palings. Lured onwards by the pleasant cadences they reached a small iron gate opening upon a narrow footpath, which was overhung by the branches of the trees.

"We may as well get nearer now we are about it," said Jim, "I could find my way about here blindfold."

"But I do not care to be a trespasser," replied Grace; "and suppose we meet a gamekeeper."

"Gill is the only gamekeeper," was the response, "and we need not be afraid of him."

"But I am not at all sure that I like a wood at night time; there are all sorts of mysterious movements under the trees. I will only come a little way at any rate."

"I will protect you," he answered with a laugh, and holding the wicket open for her to pass in.

Far above was—

"A yellow moon in splendour drooping,
A tired queen with her state oppressed,"

but her rays did not pierce the close foliage which overshadowed them, and presently Grace tripped over a stump and would have fallen but for the quick arm of her companion.

"This is very ridiculous," said she, a little ruffled by the incident. "I think you had better show me the way back again."

"Take my hand," said Jim, "and I will guide you," and the girl took it, wondering at the young fellow's persistency. The circumstances of the time and the place made her dependent upon him in a manner as absolute as it was novel, for whatever might be said as to Miss Sumner's moral courage, she lacked the gift of physical bravery. She had lived all her life in towns; night for her had always been associated with abundant street lamps, and the gloom of a wood provided her with an altogether new sensation; there was mystery in every rustle of the branches, the movement of a bird might be the movement of something far more appalling; she started as a toad hurried through the grass, and looked round apprehensively into the shadows when a twig fell behind them on the path. Though vexed with herself for having come thus far, she knew that she had not the courage to take the matter into her own hands and make her way back alone. So she followed her guide, to whom the sense of protection and guardianship was as pleasant as the sense of dependency was unwelcome to Grace herself.

Presently they emerged into a more open space; high laurel hedges took the place of trees, and glancing upwards Grace found that they were close to a wing of the mansion.

The band had not been performing for a little time; now an operatic piece was suddenly commenced, and startled them by revealing their nearness to the performers.

"Now we shall hear capitally," whispered Jim. "This way. We shall be quite safe."

As he spoke, they turned an angle of the walk and found themselves facing the front of the house, separated from it only by the laurel hedge and a wide stretch of lawn on the other side.

The bands-men were on the terrace, playing by the light of lamps attached to their music-stands. All the windows of the dining-rooms and billiard-room were open, and within the first-named apartment were visible four persons lingering over their dessert.

"There they are," whispered Jim, gleefully. "If only they knew we were looking at them!"

Grace did not respond, for the exultant suggestion opened up a by no means agreeable train of thought. It might be well for an adventurous lad to come prowling about another person's grounds at night time; for a young lady, situated as she was, it was an entirely different matter. She felt that she had thoughtlessly allowed herself to be brought into a false position, but the circumstances were such as to prevent very vigorous remonstrance, as the sound of voices might naturally attract attention. Removing her gaze from the dining-room scene, she turned to indicate her wish not to remain longer an invisible spectator of her cousin's hospitality, when she found that Jim had crossed a wide pathway which led direct to the terrace, and was peering round a corner of the laurel hedge to obtain a better view.

The girl beckoned to him impatiently, but he, glancing up, put his finger to his lips, and in dumb show urged her to stay where she was. Another peep through the bushes towards the house showed her the reason of this pantomime. George Martindale and his guests had risen from their seats, had passed through the open windows to the terrace, and were coming down the steps towards the lawn. This being so, any attempt by Jim to re-cross the open path and regain his former position by Miss Sumner's side, would almost certainly have been observed. The only course appeared to be that they should wait as they were, and trust to good fortune to deliver them from an impending dilemma, for a dilemma it certainly was, and no friendly cloud appeared to blot out the moonlight which now lay upon the open spaces. Sir Marcus and the Colonel were apparently content to stand upon the lowest of the terrace steps, where they lit cigars, and stood with their hands in their pockets, patronizingly gazing upon Nature. Their host and Julia, however, after pausing for a few moments, came down and sauntered over the grass towards a garden seat, which was placed against the shrubs, on the other side of which Grace was standing. No mean representatives of manhood and womanhood respectively were

these two who paced side by side ; he tall, square-shouldered and easy of carriage ; she scarcely less tall, supple of movement, and with well-poised head ; a comely, well-grown pair, in striking contrast from the men of five-feet six, and the women of five-feet nothing who abound in the present generation.

"What did you think of to-day's performance?" asked Martindale of his companion as they approached the seat.

"Which part of it do you mean—the minstrels, the punch and judy, or the speech-making?"

"I mean taking it as a whole."

"I think it was a decided success."

"Do you," he repeated, thoughtfully, "unfortunately there is such a large amount of humbug mixed up with all these things. Don't you agree with me?"

"Perhaps so," assented Julia, "but the great thing is to succeed in carrying out your purpose."

"Ah," said her companion, "in other words, one must hold a candle to a certain person who shall be nameless."

"Exactly."

"But even then there is the chance of the object not being realized after all. To take an instance. Suppose I want to have the honour of representing the great City of Hexbury in Parliament ; I woo the free and enlightened electors, and shake hands with innumerable gentlemen who ignore the use of soap and water ; I feast them, and laud and magnify their virtues, and in the end I find myself at the bottom of the poll, and minus several thousand pounds into the bargain. Suppose all this, and then imagine my feelings."

"We must all take our chance," observed Miss Hawkley, philosophically.

"Then the question arises whether the game is worth the candle. Take another instance. A man falls in love, and goes on doubting and fearing and hoping in turns ; he labours to make an impression on the lady's heart, he languishes and sighs, and she smiles and condescends, until one fine day the vain idiot risks the hazard and declares his devotion, only to learn, very likely, that she is prepared to adopt the stage theory and love him as a brother, but not to

accept his hand, which she is pledged to reserve for somebody else. Think of the rejected one's feelings, Miss Hawkley."

"Poor fellow," said Julia, mockingly.

"Do you mean *me*, or the imaginary being?"

"The imaginary being, of course," she answered with just the faintest emphasis on the last two words; "not that I think your picture represents the average state of things at the present day. There are very few men who are so diffident. The race of the faint-hearted has died out."

"Are you sure about that?" asked Martindale, with meaning.

"I have no reason to doubt it."

"Your preference, then, is for the warrior bold?"

"Of course, every woman prefers a brave man."

"You tempt me," said Martindale.

"What can you possibly mean?" she asked, with innocently-raised brows.

"May I tell you?"

"Really you are talking in riddles, Mr. Martindale. Shall we go in and see if papa or Sir Marcus can make them out?"

"No, I would rather *you* tried to guess them," he replied, taking her hand, and with mild force checking the half movement which she had made as if to rise.

"But I am very stupid at that kind of thing," returned Julia, at the same time making a slight and unsustained effort to free her hand.

"Shall I speak in plainer terms?"

"You—you must do what you please," she answered, with a rising colour.

"Suppose that I were to say outright. Will you marry me?"

There was a pause.

"I would rather not suppose," she said, again resorting to a delicate inflection in the pronunciation of the last word.

"Well, then, there is no question of supposition? I *do* say, will you marry me?"

"Do you wish it?"

"Wish it! Can you doubt that I do?"

"But why?"

"Because, because—" Here there was a remarkable hesitation in his utterance, and he found himself with lightning speed of thought dismissing various reasons which presented themselves as good and valid; then, of course, the only answer that could be appropriate was given in the words, "Because I love you."

Is it possible that he was conscious of a certain amount of stage effect in uttering words so sacred? Could it be that his heart was half doubting all the time, and that he was sceptical as to the *bonâ fide* character of the part which he found himself playing? There was reality, at any rate, in the supple waist round which his arm now stole with the daring of a lover not rejected, though not perhaps in so many words accepted; there was actuality in the warm red lips upon which, with increasing boldness, he pressed his own. Julia did not break away from him like a startled fawn. The low sun makes the colour. Few women would understand or appreciate the wooing of the faultless king; with most of them, as with Queen Guinevere, he who loves must have "a touch of earth."

Then—this stage passed—with more becoming ardour Martindale pressed for his answer. And Julia, knowing that the lot had fallen into her lap, shewed the time-honoured hesitation proper to the occasion. In justice, however, let it be said that she had not expected the declaration so soon; it had come with a certain measure of abruptness, which of itself was calculated to disturb her manner. She drew a long sigh, which might be variously interpreted; it might mean maidenly embarrassment; it might indicate a sense of relief, for there is always danger in delay. But, at any rate, the suitor was accepted, whether by word or sign is of little moment, but at all events George Martindale was freed from doubt, and by some means or other permitted to know that for richer or poorer Julia was his.

And did she love him? What if she did not? Was it not sufficient that she should begin by liking him, by suiting him, by being a becoming match for him, and a fitting mistress for his household. The rest might come with time.

A little later they rose up and went towards the house, all

unconscious of the presence of the involuntary witnesses of their betrothal.

CHAPTER XII.

AN AUTHORESS.

NEVER in the whole course of her life had Grace Sumner felt so strange a mixture of feelings as that which filled her mind as she stole back through the park, guided by Jim, after her unwilling and unseen presence at George Martin-dale's love-making. Jim, too, was silent. His position had been such that he had seen none of the acts of endearment, and had only overheard fragments of the lovers' conversation, but those fragments were of a sufficiently convincing character. It was, to say the least of it, embarrassing to those who had been lookers-on. There was a sense of humiliation, of downright degradation, in fact, to say nothing of other sentiments, which effectually checked conversation, as they went back to Doctor Singleton's house.

At the gate they parted, and Jim went homeward, whilst Grace passed alone into the Doctor's presence. He was just waking from his nap, and, for aught he could tell to the contrary, Miss Sumner's evening stroll might not have extended beyond the limits, of the garden. Grace kissed her uncle dutifully, and, glad to escape questioning, went straightway to her room, and there sat down by the open window to think upon all that had happened within the last forty minutes; to try to arrive at some proper understanding of the new pain which filled the heart which she had fondly thought to be so admirably disciplined.

What was this sudden misery that had come to poison her newly-acquired peace? Wearily she asked herself the question as she leaned out into the quiet summer night. Was she, after her matter-of-fact conduct, her due considera-

tion for things expedient, to discover to her own sorrow that

“To love is in our power, but not to lay it aside,”

that the early dream associated with George Martindale’s vacations had not been forgotten ; that it was something which perhaps might be ignored whilst time and absence could do their work without break or interruption, but which flashed back into the vividness of reality when the cooled lover was found to be wooing another woman. If jealousy it were which filled Grace Sumner’s breast, it took no violent form ; it brought but a weariness of love, life, all things, a sickening sense of loneliness, a shrinking from the blank and dreary future. Then she strove to harden her heart against her quondam lover. Was it anything to surprise her that a man should forsake an old love for a new ; had not sages said and poets sung that men were deceivers ever ? Where was the man who had married his first love, and what right had she to complain because George Martindale had forgotten her dark eyes and conceived a preference for

“Fair Yoland with the yellow hair ! ”

Unfortunately it affords us but little consolation, at such times, to find that history affords parallel cases, and that instead of forming a distinguished exception to the rule we only belong to the common multitude, who have fared in just the same fashion before us.

“Quisque suos patimur manes ! ”

Grace knew nothing about Virgil, but it was with some such trite theory as this that she tried to console her troubled spirit—tried in vain, for whose pain does it mitigate to be told that others have suffered in like manner ; who amongst us does not believe that he or she, by right, should be numbered with the favoured few rather than with

“That undistinguished crowd behind,
For whom life’s not so rosy.”

The placid moon, the clear, bright stars, upon which Grace gazed as if to draw from them some key to all this heart-pain, this disappointment, this dreariness of life which seemed suddenly to have been revealed to her, looked coldly, calmly on her upraised face. Only the tree tops, moving mournfully in the slight night breeze, spoke in

sympathy with her questioning spirit. All her lonely life seemed to travel before the girl's mind as she knelt by the window with her face resting on her hand ; lonely after her widowed-mother's death, lonely at the school where she had passed seven long years, lonely in the dull and oft-changed lodgings, where she had waited upon her self-absorbed and fretful aunt, and had learnt to hope that through George Martindale's love the future might bring brighter things to her. Now she had discovered that the future would do nothing of the kind. As her life had been so was it to continue—lonely to the end. By-and-by she noticed that the stars had paled. A greyish light stole over the landscape. Faint colours crept up and tinged the slow-moving clouds, then these colours broadened and deepened ; the shadows passed away ; hedges and trees gradually appeared in clearer outline ; the short summer night was over, and the heath lay stretched before her in the solemn stillness of early morning. The birds awoke by twos and threes in the creeper under the roof, and twittered enquiringly ; other birds answered from the trees away in the park, more birds joined in from all directions, until the air seemed alive with their song. Then Grace drew down her window with a slight shiver at the keen breath of the new day. She was weary in body, weary in brain. Sleep, sweet downy sleep might be hers, and she sought it thankfully. Perhaps with waking hours might come new courage, new strength, and a calmer spirit.

After the people's holiday the summer seemed to come to a sudden termination. There followed two or three weeks of gusty, sunless days, with frequent rain, weather which was by no means calculated to enliven a depressed mind. Long rambles were out of the question, and Grace, with a conviction that work was an excellent thing at such a time, applied herself with a will to the completion of her novel. She had studied the publishers' column in the daily papers, and had, in her own mind, made a selection of two or three firms, any one of which would be acceptable as the means of introducing her story to the reading world. Naturally she pitched upon the best established houses, and with trembling heart approached them through the post. The

promptitude with which her applications were acknowledged caused her some surprise; but this gave place to disappointment, when a careful examination showed that one of the replies was only a lithographed form, of which who shall say how many counterparts had gone forth to other literary aspirants by the very same mail.

Messrs. So-and-So would be happy to peruse, with a view to publication, any MS. sent for that purpose (so ran the form), which, if found unsuitable, would be returned on receipt of stamps, &c., but, while taking every precaution, Messrs. So-and-So did not hold themselves responsible for the safe custody or return of any manuscript. This missive had a disheartening effect in a vague sort of way. When we write about our nearest and dearest we do not care to be coldly answered in such stereotyped fashion. It conveyed, too, an impression of numbers and competition which induced the authoress to withhold her cherished work from this respectable firm.

But other answers came, evidently penned specially as responses to her offer. Each and all of the writers were ready to "peruse with a view to publication," &c., and at length Grace put the finishing touches to the tale, and dispatched it in a bulky parcel, marked with care, to a well-known publisher.

Then there was nothing to do but to wait with fear and trembling for the great man's decision; and, after a week had passed, Grace found her heart fluttering wildly as the jaded postman swung in at the gate with his leathern bag. Then the uncertainty and the delay became intolerable, and she wrote politely to know when she might expect an answer. Promptly came the reply, which left her just where it found her. The publisher's hands were very full, and he had not yet received his reader's report upon the merits of Miss Sumner's work. But at length there came a morning when Grace was strolling in the garden before breakfast, the quick steps of the bearer of the post-bag caught her ear, and the next moment he turned in at the gate with one letter in his hand.

"For me?" she asked.

He was a taciturn postman, and simply answered by

placing the letter in her hand, and hurrying out as if the whole burden of the post-office system rested upon his shoulders.

It was for her, and she found it to contain a polite expression of regret that the report of Mr. So-and-So's literary adviser was not sufficiently favourable to enable Mr. So-and-So to undertake the publication of the story referred to.

Grace bore the disappointment better than she had expected to do. She knew she was no genius, but still she felt convinced that her novel was as good a novel as, if not rather better than, many a work which she had read and seen praised in critical journals. Moreover, under these first rebuffs, literary beginners always comfort themselves with the knowledge that in days gone by dull-headed publishers have rejected the works of some of our ablest writers, and paid inadequate prices for works which were destined to live through all time. So the MS. was sent to another establishment, and the same routine of correspondence followed, and the same result was arrived at, with this qualification, that the literary adviser condescended to speak favourably of some features of the tale, but on the whole could not recommend its publication.

So the pen-and-ink hero and heroine, with their satellites, came back into the writer's hands again, and were polished up here and there, and then journeyed up to London again to be delivered on approval at a third establishment. Here things were evidently managed in a different manner; for in a surprisingly short space of time (a period which could scarcely indicate that there had been much perusal of the MS.), an answer came, stating, in most business-like manner, the terms upon which Miss Sumner's work might be published; and these terms, after consultation with Dr. Singleton, Grace accepted.

CHAPTER XIII.

BETROTHED.

IT was a bad omen for George Martindale's future, that his sentiments with respect to his intended wife should differ so materially in her absence from those which possessed him when in the light of her presence. Face to face with her beauty of form and feature, under the influence of her sleepy violet eyes, and he was content that it should be

“They two, and they two, and they two for aye ! ”

He might even have been tempted to adopt the Tennysonian theory, and to give all others bliss—

“And all his worldly worth for this,
To waste his whole heart in one kiss
Upon her perfect lips ! ”

In the garden at “The Cedars,” after the dinner party, he had raged inwardly when the Colonel, in all innocence of intention, broke in upon the *tête-à-tête*; and yet, as has been recorded, when walls and darkness hid the lady from his view a little later, he felt rather thankful than otherwise. Even so, when he awoke upon the morning after the second and more finished garden-scene, he yawned somewhat doubtfully over the performance. There was a kind of feeling that he had acted not wisely but too fast. It was not creditable that a man should be so uncertain as to the balance of his own wishes and the wisdom of his own actions; nevertheless, such a state of things is far from rare.

If there are plenty of men who marry in haste and repent at leisure, clearly there must be an even larger number who plight their troth for insufficient reasons, and who only recognize the *non sequitur* of constant devotion when there is a difficulty in severing the links which they have rashly forged.

Not that Martindale now repented of his step in any serious sense of the term. It was desirable that he should marry, and Julia Hawley would be as suitable a wife in

most respects as he could hope to find. The lonely grandeur of his new and large-roomed home had already galled upon his somewhat fickle taste, and this weariness of solitary magnificence had in a large degree contributed to the new condition of things, by leading to those frequent visits to "The Cedars," which establishment was only attractive by reason of one particular inmate. However, it mattered very little now whether the proposal of marriage was the result merely of propinquity, fascination, infatuation, or anything else. The deed was done, and it behoved the lover to seek a formal ratification of the compact at the hands of the lady's father, whom (regardless of the precedents to be found on the stage and in fiction rather than in real life) he had not considered it essential to consult on the first instance.

The Colonel was prepared for the interview. Peace and contentment reigned within his breast when he contemplated this desirable alliance. There were various good and sufficient reasons which made it desirable that his daughter should "marry well." Indiscreet speculations had of late resulted in ominous pecuniary clouds; for years, too, he had been living just a little beyond his income, and now the shoe was, in various parts, beginning to pinch. Moreover, the majority of his ward and nephew, James Travers, was close at hand, and this circumstance had a significance for the Colonel which caused him considerable discomfort.

He heaved a long sigh when on the night of their return after the rejoicings at the park Julia permitted him to learn what had taken place. She only half understood that sigh. It was a sigh of thankfulness, in fact, of compound thankfulness. But no one could guess that Colonel Hawkley had, that very evening, been on the verge of asking his future son-in-law for a trifling loan of a couple of hundred pounds. Devoutly grateful now was the worthy gentleman that circumstances had prevented his carrying out that intention, for who could tell what effect this little loan might not have had upon Martindale's intentions. To borrow from a possible candidate for one's daughter's hand is in most circumstances impolitic; but when the candidate has

been accepted, what more natural than that an intended father-in-law, temporarily embarrassed, should select that individual for his confidant and creditor.

It is needless, then, to say that Colonel Hawkley threw no obstacles in the way of his daughter's union with their new neighbour. Not, of course, that he showed any outward signs of eagerness or jubilation. With calm dignity he listened to the suitor's overtures and then pressed his hand. What more appropriate than that a tear should start to the paternal eye at such a time?

"It shall be as you wish," said the self-denying father. "'The Cedars' will be very dull without her, for she is a good girl, Martindale, a good girl; but I believe you are worthy of her."

George shewed no disposition to dispute the last proposition, and put an end to the interview as quickly as possible. Then followed a few weeks, during which the lovers were enabled to wear out the awkwardness of the new situation, and to learn a little more about each other's character and tastes. At the end of that time, and when the wearied members of the legislature were turning their backs upon St. Stephen's, and seeking recreation on mountain, moor, and sea, it was arranged that they—the Colonel, Julia, and Martindale—should join Sir Marcus Gregory on board his yacht at Cowes, and take a month's cruise in home waters. Julia laid in a stock of appropriate costumes, feeling indifferent now as to any trifling addition to the "little bills," which were already rather numerous. The Colonel, too, on the strength of the new connection, gave an order to his tailors, who had of late been rather pressing in a disagreeable way, and appeared on board the yacht clad in blue serge and straw hat, as if he were to the manner born. Sir Marcus received them with quite the air of the hearty sailor, and they weighed anchor and started up channel with the promise of a pleasant cruise.

In the meantime Jim Travers also was preparing to take his departure from "The Cedars." He had lately grown dissatisfied with his life, and arrangements had been made for his going to London to commence to study for the bar. He had already made up his mind to this course, when he

persuaded Grace Sumner to take that evening stroll which placed them in such an awkward position. He had, however, said nothing about his intentions. For many days afterwards he had no opportunity of doing so. Grace was working hard at her book, and, either by accident or design, avoided meeting him. There is generally a wish to keep clear of a person who has been a partner with one in an embarrassing situation, until, at any rate, time and other occurrences have set the inconvenient incident well in the background. But, in this particular case, there were other reasons which operated upon Grace Sumner's mind. She had lately discovered that the young fellow was not so entirely a boy in thought and feeling as she had at first supposed. There had been signs in his looks and manner which made her think that here was a possible lover, and in that character, for very sufficient reasons, she was not prepared to regard him.

About a week after the Hawkleys had left home, Jim walked over to Dr. Singleton's to say good-bye. The doctor was not in, nor was Miss Sumner. The young man turned away from the house with a look of disappointment which struck the observant Hicks. She was a sympathetic soul and kindly.

"I think Miss Sumner have only gone across the heath, sir," she said.

Jim thanked her, and striding across the grass, presently caught sight of a solitary figure walking towards the downs. It was a dull, windy day, suggestive of a premature autumn, and Grace, struggling against the blustering wind, was not conscious of his approach until he was close upon her.

"Are you going for a walk? May I come with you?" he asked, bluntly.

"Certainly, if you like," she answered, and they walked onward side by side, in silence.

"I came after you to say good-bye," said Jim, presently. "I am going away."

"For a trip, I suppose?"

"Not much of a trip. I am going to London to work. I should have quite enough to live on without doing anything, but I may as well try to make myself fit for something, don't you think so?"

Grace agreed.

"I suppose," he went on, "I shall find you here when I come back?"

She shook her head doubtfully.

"I don't know, I am sure; that depends upon a variety of things; besides, I don't know *when* you are coming back."

"Of course I shall never be back here for good, but I shall be down for Christmas, and I daresay I shall have to stay until after Julia's wedding; that is to be early in the new year."

In spite of herself the girl could not prevent the colour from rushing to her face at the information contained in the last sentence. She turned slightly away.

"I don't think I shall be here at that time," she answered.

"Why not?" asked Jim, looking at her keenly.

"Because I have my living to get. I cannot let my uncle keep me for ever."

"I wish you would promise me to be here at Christmas time," he said, presently.

"I am afraid I cannot promise that."

"Will you say that you will write and tell me that you are going, if you leave before then. You can promise that, at any rate?"

"Yes, I think I can promise that," she replied, slowly, "that is, if you really think it worth while."

"Yes, I do think it worth while," he said, impetuously.

Grace raised no further difficulty. She had thought it well to make her manner cold during this short conversation, but there was something in the young man's voice which convinced her of the wisdom of granting such a small concession as he had asked for, rather than drift into complications, the materials for which seemed to be very close at hand.

It seemed expedient, however, not to prolong the walk under these conditions, so she took the initiative and turned homeward. At Doctor Singleton's gate they parted. Jim held her hand, and looked at her wistfully for a moment, then turned and went striding along the road with his dog at his heels. Grace stood watching him for a

second or two, and then, with a sigh, turned into the garden. It was not until now that she realized how much she should miss his companionship.

Jim went to London the next morning, and the servants at "The Cedars" and Blatherwick Park were left free to exchange hospitalities at their employer's expense, which they did upon a liberal scale, in honour of the pending union between the two houses. However, the Hawkleys came back sooner than they were expected. The fact was, that after the first week or two, the novelty of the thing had worn off. A life on the ocean wave became rather monotonous. Julia, who had been all amiability and vivacity at first, intent upon picking up nautical terms, and understanding the working of the gear, delighted with the songs of the crew when they gathered for'ard towards night, and with all the other features of yachting life, began to wax rather apathetic. It was tiresome to be disturbed at an unearthly hour every morning by the inevitable splashing, and scrubbing, and pattering overhead. The "aye, aye, sir," of the man at the helm, became a little wearisome ; all the books of interest had been already skimmed, and the piano, as a resource, lost its attractions. Moreover, the weather changed. Up to a certain point it had been all smooth sailing, beneath cloudless skies. Now the winds and the waves arose ; there were disagreeable plunges and lurches, the timbers creaked, and the deck got wet and slippery as they were

"Roll'd to starboard, roll'd to larboard, when the surge was
seething free."

And, alas ! that even beauty should not be exempt, Miss Hawkley suffered as most of us have suffered in similar circumstances. Even the Colonel acquired a jaundiced look, and showed a reluctance to sustain a conversation.

It was not George Martindale's first lesson in yachting, and the change in wind and water was to him, personally, not unwelcome. He felt as if he had been with the lotos-eaters of late, that he had had plenty of lounging and love-making, and wanted something to revive his manliness. Whilst his betrothed lay gazing at the not remote ceiling of her cabin, and longing for land as she had never longed for

anything before, he was upon deck facing the elements, lending a hand wherever it was wanted, getting wet to the skin, and feeling all the better for his exertions.

Intensely thankful was Julia—and, secretly, her father also—when late one evening they reached the shelter of Mount's Bay, and saw the friendly lights of England's most westerly town. They slept that night at a big hotel facing the bay, where the boom of the waves still made itself heard, though two, at least, of the party, would fain have shut out the sound. After a day's rest the Hawkleys went home by rail, and of course Martindale, as became a devoted lover, accompanied them.

To be continued.

HER SECRET.

TELL you where her secret lies,
In her lips ? Or in her eyes ?
In the smiles that sun her face ?
In her ways so full of grace ?
In her words that come and go
Soft like sledge-bells in the snow ?
In her wisdom ? In her wit ?
Nay, I scarcely think that's it ;
Some day, though, I must divine
What it is—when she is mine !

HENRIETTE A. DUFF.



COFFEE IN PUBLIC :

QUITE FOR THE GOOD OF THE HOUSE.

“**C**ON my calling in lately at one of the most noted Temple Coffee-houses—”

Let there be affectionate attention. It is a refreshing Spectator who speaks, recounting his adventure on October the 16th, 1711.

“—I found the whole room, which was full of young students, divided into several parties, each of which was deeply engaged in some controversy.”

That was it. And the controversies ended 167 years ago, and the young students have worn out their full-bottomed wigs by use on State-days, their coifs as K. C.’s, their black caps as judges, and the young students have even had their eulogistic epitaphs (in choice Latin), and the clouds and cherubim of their marble monuments, so stained and chipped by Time, the strictest search could almost defy all trace of them. Yet what is the pleasant fact? That the recollection of the groups or “parties” into which these young gentlemen formed themselves, that the figures of these young gentlemen (the major part of them, it may be sworn, setting their hats on with the “Ramilies Cock”), that the buzz of the arguments these young gentlemen held on the demolition of Dunkirk, on Marlborough’s tactics, on Mrs. Freeman, Queen Anne, rise warm and vivid in the imagination to this day, as the doors of another Temple Coffee-house yield smoothly to the push, and an array of quite another sort of public coffee-drinkers can be heard and seen.

" Large cup of coffee, two slices," cry these, ordering peremptorily what costs, as a total, two-pence.

" A small tea," they cry again, a penny. " A small cocoa," a halfpenny. " Two large cocoas, four slices, a large beef," eight-pence; making no oversight, in the score, of any solid or savoury item.

It is a vastly different picture, as different as the period. And as the buyers of the enumerated refreshments stand by a marble counter to utter their telegraphic demands and pay for them, other striking matters dividing them from their predecessors may be briefly noted. For instance, there is the beam of a brilliant light all over this modern Temple Coffee-tavern, this newest invention of an entertainment-house; there is brilliant polish there; there is the freest of all free ingress. Moreover, nobody has to peer about, wondering where the tavern is; nobody has to be disconcerted on finding it forbidding, or, at the least, unsightly; nobody is deterred from entering by having to master the difficult handle of a dark and hiding door. Although it is established for the harbourage of such very poor as the labourer in his corduroy, able to spare only a halfpenny, perhaps, for the cup of cocoa or coffee that is to wash down his home-cut hunk of bread, yet fair marble tables are spread, hither and thither, and in all corners, on the two floors where the coffee-drinkers may go; there are light varnished benches, with rails at the back for leaning, arranged all around; there are games of draughts, chess, dominoes, and others similar, placed for the free use of any couples, or groups, of the coffee-drinkers who may wish for them. There is a handsome buffet of pure carved oak, too, lighted with a blaze of cheery looking-glass, as the back-ground of the broad wall that is behind the serving-men, the busy drawers; whilst, for lesser detail, there is the clean earthenware, pure white, marked only with the proprietary name, there is the set of daily papers, for the reading of all who have the time to wait their turn, there are notices along the walls that working-men may bring their own food into this splendid shelter, buying nothing, if they are inclined. Then, pervading all, there is the buzz of satisfied talk, just as there is a buzz on coming

upon reception-rooms of richer company, employed on richer fare; there is the fragrance of coffee and the other food, and the hot steam of it; there is, mingled in, or stealing in, somehow (and by permission; or it was considered the lads and men could make no home of it), the pungent and dimming presence of tobacco-smoke. It makes it all very easy and unceremonious; it gives the broadest liberty to carry the bought coffee or cocoa to whatever seat may be preferred, whether it be on the level where the doors give admittance, or up stairs, to the first-floor; it lets working-men take in their friends, as luckier people with parlours of their own can take their friends under their own roof-top, with the feeling that they can have a whole evening's light and warmth and sociality for a penny, for a halfpenny, for nothing, and with the feeling that they can stop and sit and lounge, that they can talk, or go away, exactly to suit their own comfort and convenience, and exactly (within proper limits) as if the place had each man for its master, and the place were each man's own.

Let a turn be taken now to the ordinary coffee-houses of to-day. These are the coffee-houses of most of the days yet past in this present century, and they slink away, as a rule, in bye-streets; they are dull and humble; they have sallow holland blinds, drawn deep down behind sallow window-sashes (precluding all look out from in, and all look in from out); they depend on the embellishment of an ugly-shaped old crockery tea-pot, and a few mock eggs stuck upright in equally ugly egg-cups; they have doors very decidedly shut to and hasped; they have divisions in their interiors that rise high-by and dry, that build everybody off from everybody, that are consequently very exclusive and deterring and dumb and wooden. In effect, the ordinary coffee-houses of to-day have a general air as if they said: "Pray go by. Pray, take no look at me. I am very hard to get into; you won't like me when you do get into me; and you won't like what I have to sell, I am quite certain." As for the keepers of these houses, to offer no enticement seems to be the best idea they have as to how to promote business; they refuse decoration and exhilaration; they depend entirely on customers exploring the way to their premises, and

effecting an entrance in the teeth of every obstacle. If people want to eat and drink (is their apparent resolution), they shall do a great deal of enquiring and discovery before they shall get the eating and drinking done; if people light at last on the place required, they shall find it all gloom and dreariness, and shall see all things of such fashion as shall make them glad to get away. And the result of this has been—disaster. A set of other houses for the public has arisen, familiar, popular, universal,—established on a far more philosophic understanding of the principles of commerce and the demands of human nature. These other houses have so shaped themselves, and so decked themselves, and so considered every item of customers' cost and convenience and captivation, that customers pour into them by the score and score; that especial police regulations have been instituted to keep these customers into rule; that sessions-full of senatorial eloquence have been expended on them, leading to stringent Acts of Parliament. Existing,—nay, flourishing,—in this manner, these public-houses take their victorious stand to the right, to the left, at the face, in the rear; starring the streets at the shortest intervals, at the handiest places, with the finest brilliance and glass and gloss and gilding, they are round the corner, they are straight on, they are a little farther,—everywhere. At them, the smart shutters are snapped down at 5 o'clock in the morning, sharp; not to be put up again till midnight, with even then the certainty that buyers will be turned away. At them, business is made so brisk and driving, there is obliged to be a “double-shift” of servers kept,—two “leash of drawers, all called by their Christian names, as Tom, Dick, Francis,”—for the reason that no one set of men could “anon, anon,” the whole (of such a) day long, or bear the strain of so much lifting and handling over. At them, again, there are heard sounds (coarse sounds, it is true) of incessant talk, push, drive, life; with a dazzling light by which to see the push, and a fine loftiness for the blaze and vigour. And at them, lastly, there is little risk for managers and proprietors, since prosperity is in such solid case, most of these are able to wear costly clothing, are able to keep lavish tables, can live their lives with far less care than the

majority of traders, and with far more surety that income will pleasantly over-lap expenditure.

Well, as much as this being accomplished and established, every item of it had to be considered, when a certain small knot of philanthropists and financiers were planning the last new "Temple" Coffee-Tavern and its batch of brothers, as outcome of all other coffee-taverns from the Spectator's, downwards. These philanthropists and financiers having before them the tradesmen who do succeed, and who succeed triumphantly, and having before them the little old coffee-shop that slinks into corners (and so forth), that can barely pay its way, that has never been entered by anybody who could possibly keep out of it, had it in their power to form their new venture on either model. In the end, it is excellent to be able to state that the philanthropists and financiers saw where genius was, as genius generously generally does, and chose the course that genius had taken. They recognized the absurdity of being dull and gloomy and tasteless and demure, since it led to mediocrity and deterioration and failure, and they recognized the wisdom of adopting whatever public-house keepers adopt (within proper limits), of holding the track of these as the right track, of resolutely determining to follow their rich leading. For, it came to the philanthropists and financiers, in quite a straight-out and commercial manner, if coffee-taverns are to fight beer-taverns, they must fight with the beer-taverns' newest and most glittering and effectual weapons. To do this, coffee-taverns must entice and decoy; must serve the class the beer-taverns serve; must serve that class in that class's own fashion. To do this, first and foremost, coffee-taverns must show that there are beverages as satisfactory as beer (to be drunk upon the premises, after the old formula; or to be carried away in jugs), coffee-taverns must show there are beverages as comforting as beer, that there are beverages to be bought as cheap as beer, that there are beverages to be lighted upon in the same way, at any moment, with just as total an absence of fore-ordering or premeditation. And, further:—As beer-taverns are the inveterate opponents, rivals, competitors, and adversaries, of coffee-taverns, the promoters of coffee-taverns foresaw

that they must provide advantages not provided by such a formidable enemy, and by this manœuvre make victory certain. Accordingly, they allow working-men to have their food cooked for them, gratis, in their new good kitchens; they allow working-men (as has been said) to stay on their premises, gratis, to use seats, and tables, and games, and company, without let or hindrance or charge from anybody; and they do not turn their customers out on any part of Sundays, since the Intoxicating Liquors Closing Bill does not touch them, and they can offer their bright warmth and shelter the whole day long.

It is not necessary to say a word here in favour of that temperance question that is, of course, at the bottom of this most modern branch of most modern speculation and good-will. All the world is aware of the horror of intemperance; all the world is aware of the purity and goodness of temperance;—in spite of a large section being averse to pass to total abstinence, since (for one reason), to quote from an experienced medical officer: “If alcohol were stamped out, in a *bona-fide* manner, all our tinctures must follow, with chloroform and ether in addition, as they all contain a certain amount of alcohol, in the shape of rectified or proof spirit.” It suffices to say that the promoters of coffee-taverns believe that there has never been a fair race, up to this period, between what is good in this particular line of commerce and what is bad. The promoters of coffee-taverns believe also, emphatically, that masses of the working classes are eager to be free of pernicious surroundings, if only surroundings that are not pernicious are placed plentifully and conveniently at their hand. So, as a fair race is what can be desired for everybody, it is most earnestly to be hoped that it shall be had now, and that when the good thing has been quite sufficiently provided, it shall be followed by a most excellent and comforting result.

JENNETT HUMPHREYS.



THE GOLDEN AGE.

“That was a God, and is a lawyer’s clerk
The rent roll Cupid of our rainy isles.”

TENNYSON.

I hate this age of mimicry and shams,
Its empty hearts, its boastful blue cold blood,
That feeds a life, whose contact chills the first
Warm heart-beatings in their joyous Springtime ;
I hate its pruderries, the walls whitewashen
Which hide the vile impurities within,
The loathsome breasts, that with their vile pollutions
Defile the pure and beauteous lips of babes.

Oh ! grovelling, grasping, avaricious age,
Hast thou no shrines undesecrated by
The worship of thy lustful golden gods ?
Oh ! mother in whose womb I fashioned was
For what was I begotten with a heart ?
(The scion of some race unrecognised)
For this great crowd of empty skulls to scoff at ?
Are men but better than the brutes, to buy
And barter, bargain, gather, and get gain ?
And we live but to pacify our passion,
As do the unreasoning creatures of the field ?
Is marriage but the lawful theft of gold ?
And matchless maidens, fair as fairest flowers
That blossom in the golden Summer time,

Are they all soulless as the water nymph ?
There is no claim of kin atween sweet love,
And the ill-favoured child of heartlessness
That knits with golden threads two fireless souls.

My youth was one great longing for lost love,
And when I found the quest was vain, it seemed
As if some unskilled hand had struck false chords
Upon my heart-strings, leaving them mistoned
To give forth nothing but discordant sounds.
Oh ! my heart's harmony, so rich and full,
That in its echo was the softened sound
Of mellow inimitable melody,
And whose sweet strains filled my whole life
With matchless mellifluent music,
Shall never more thy tones with rapture thrill
Through every vein, making my blood to dance
With light and sparkling joyance to Hope's chords ?
No more ! but sad and tuneless from my heart
My blood shall creep to cheer my loveless day
As some half frozen sluggish City stream.

HORACE L. NICHOLSON.



MADAME.

AMONGST the collection of pictures in the possession of Her Majesty the Queen at Windsor Castle, there is one which rarely fails to attract the attention and admiration of the beholder. It is of a young and noble-looking woman, with a profusion of chestnut hair, arranged in the fashion called *tête de mouton*; a certain thickness of eyebrow and width of forehead impart almost a foreign aspect to the face, but these peculiarities are amply redeemed by the winning sweetness of the mouth, and the loving expression that looks at you from the soft dark eyes. She wears a robe of white satin, elegantly trimmed with pearls and *point de France*, and half covered by a velvet mantle embroidered in *fleur de lys*. Two little girls, charming specimens of childish beauty, lean caressingly against her lap, apparently picking up red and white roses, fallen from a vase standing near. A sword is on a cushion at their feet. We are told it is a portrait of Madame and her children, by the celebrated Mignard. No need to ask which of the royal ladies who bore this simple appellation is here designated, for one alone seems to have made the title peculiarly her own. From amidst the brilliant throng that graced the Court of the *Grand Monarque*, Madame steps forth, invested with the never-dying interest attached to royalty, beauty, and misfortune, when linked together in the story of a woman's life. Here, indeed, the extremes of destiny meet. A princess and a fugitive, a daughter of England and a dependant upon foreign bounty, the idol of a Court and a neglected wife, a woman in the first flush of youth and beauty, yet suddenly struck down like a flower, the history of

Henrietta Anne Stuart appeals to the warmest sympathies of the human heart.

The old chroniclers tell us "It was on a fair and jocund morn of June," in the year 1644, that Henrietta Maria, wife of Charles I., gave birth to her youngest child. A bitter mockery must the face of Nature have seemed to the hapless Queen, who, throughout the length and breadth of England, found but one spot wherein to await her hour of maternal peril. The ancient city of Exeter, then held for the King by its loyal governor, Sir John Berkeley, thus became the refuge and cradle of loyalty. Charles, whose passionate love for his wife amounted almost to a failing, sent the following grief but touching entreaty to his favourite physician, Sir Theodore Magerne, to attend the accouchement :—

"MAGERNE,

"For the love of *me* go to my wife.

"C. R."

On the 16th day of the month the expected babe first saw the light, another claimant born to the fatal heritage of woe, which has become synonymous with the name of Stuart. No royal ceremonial inaugurated the birth of the Princess Henrietta Anne, for troublous times and evil had fallen upon her royal parents. The rapid approach of the Parliamentary troops, commanded by Lord Essex, soon rendered the old cathedral town an insecure abode for the still delicate Queen, whose health was little likely to be heeded by those who openly offered a reward for her head. In this emergency Henrietta Maria showed herself a true daughter of Henri Quatre. Fortune, good or ill, does not change men and women, it but develops their character. A French woman and a Catholic, the Queen was an object of especial hatred to the Roundhead faction—her presence, therefore, served but to add increased difficulties to the already critical position of the King. Regardless of the natural weakness that oppressed her feminine frame, she bade a distracted farewell to her unconscious babe, and with a few attendants fled secretly from Exeter a fortnight after her accouchement. Arrived at Plymouth, she embarked in a friendly Dutch vessel for France. Destitute, now, and

weary, the once brilliant Henrietta Maria appeared before the Regent Anne of Austria, to use her own words, "More like a wandering heroine of romance than a real Queen of England." She received every mark of affectionate welcome from the Court and Nation, who regarded her as "the daughter, sister, and aunt of their kings." But the desolate Queen remained inconsolable; her heart, racked with terrible anxieties, knew no rest, each succeeding month bringing gloomier tidings of the failing fortunes of the Stuart cause.

Two years elapsed before Henrietta again saw the little babe she had left behind in England. This joyful meeting came to pass through the wit and courage of Lady Morton, *gouvernante* to the princess, who effected her escape with remarkable skill and dexterity. Receiving notice after the fatal battle of Naseby that the Parliament intended to remove her tender charge to Sion House, where Henry Duke of Gloucester and the Princess Elizabeth Stuart were kept in close confinement, Lady Morton determined to fly with the child into France. She found it no easy matter to disguise the lovely face and figure of a Court beauty; but woman's *finesse* is rarely baffled. Sewing an artificial hump of linen upon her shoulder, her complexion stained, and garments tattered, Lady Morton carried the little one in her arms on foot to Dover, giving out they were the wife and son of a French pedlar. The princess broke forth into a burst of childish rage in seeing herself clothed in a wretched frock instead of the fine robes and laces hitherto provided for her use by the generosity of Lady Morton, and strove to inform every passer by on their route "that she was not a beggar boy, but a little princess, and that the shabby coat she wore was not her own." Fortunately, her perilous pratlings were neither understood nor heeded, and Lady Morton crossed with her in the common packet-boat to Calais, without awakening the least suspicion in the minds of their fellow travellers. Once landed on French ground, all further concealment became useless. Lady Morton threw off her hump, dressed Henrietta again as a "little princess," and made haste to Paris, where she restored her charge to the enraptured Queen, who hugged and kissed the child a thousand times, calling her by every

name that love can invent. The English ambassador records in his despatches—"I was yesterday at St. Germain to kiss the sweet little Princess Henrietta's hands, the manner of my Lady Morton bringing her highness away is a pretty romance." Edmund Waller, the courtly poet, then resident in Paris, thus celebrates the much talked of exploit :—

"When the kind nymph, changing her faultless shape,
Became unhandsome, handsome to 'scape,
When thro' the guards, the river, and the sea,
Faith, beauty, wit, and courage made their way."

But soon the civil disturbance, known as the war of the Fronde, reduced Henrietta Maria and her child to a state of lamentable destitution. Left without proper maintenance, and unable to procure either food or firing in that distracted period, the Queen passed the stormy and dismal Christmas of 1648, her thoughts divided between the civil strife raging around her and the distant and darker prospect of affairs in England. Cardinal de Ratz, in his memoirs, gives a pathetic description of the melancholy position of the royal exiles. "I found the Queen," he says, "in the bed-room of her daughter (it was then past noon on the 11th January and there was no fire though thick flakes of snow were falling), 'You see,' said her majesty, 'I am come to keep Henrietta company, the poor child has not been able to rise to day from want of fire.' Posterity will hardly credit that a granddaughter of Henri Quatre wanted a faggot to enable her to rise in the month of January under the eyes of the people of France."

But anguish far deeper awaited Henrietta Maria than that of the necessities of life; the trial, murder, and burial of Charles I. had taken place before the Queen, besieged as she was in Paris, could receive the least intelligence of this awful catastrophe. When the tidings at length reached her, she stood motionless as a statue, without words and without tears. The tragedy of real life, unlike that of the stage, is generally a veiled feeling. Henrietta Anne was too young to sympathise in the grief of her bereaved mother, who retired alone to the Carmelite Convent, Faubourg St. Jacques, there to commence that perpetual requiem of the heart which ceased not till the last moment of her existence.

Little variety occurred in the child life of Henrietta Anne for the next few years. On the expiration of the Fronde she repaired to the pleasant palace of St. Germains with her mother, to pursue her education under the superintendence of Lady Morton. The Queen resolved to bring up this favorite child of her heart in her own religion, asserting that she possessed a written permission from Charles I. to that effect. The Princess received instruction from Père Cyprian Jamache, a Capuchin friar, who has left a detailed account of her pretty ways and speeches. She attended catechism in the public church with the poor children of the parish, but at times private lessons were given in the presence of Lady Morton. One day the Queen herself assisted at this tuition owing to a temporary indisposition of the *gouvernante*, when the Princess expressed an ardent desire that every one should believe in her religion.

"Since you have so much zeal, my daughter," said her majesty, "I wonder you do not try to convert your governess."

"Madame," replied the little princess, "I am doing as much as I can."

"And how do you do it?" asked the Queen.

"Madam," returned the child, with sweet simplicity, "I begin by embracing my governess. I clasp her round the neck. I kiss her many times, and then I say be converted, Lady Morton. Be a Catholic, Lady Morton. Père Jamache says you must be a Catholic to be saved. You have heard him as well as me, so be a Catholic, my good lady, and I will love you dearly."

As Henrietta Anne advanced in years we are told she possessed "a winning grace, a sweet temper, and a noble spirit, applying herself to all the exercises fitting to her royal degree. She excelled the most skilful in dancing, in playing on musical instruments, and all similar accomplishments," while the more solid requirements were not neglected. In history she was unusually versed by the care and attention of her mother, who used to thank Heaven she had herself been born a queen, even "*une reine matheureine*," but often lamented her ignorance of history, so essential to sovereigns, saying she had learned her lessons of human

life and character solely from her own sad experience, and learned too late when the irrevocable part governed her destiny.

The early grace and vivacity of the little Princess soon rendered her favourite at the French Court. Before she had completed her twelfth year she took part in a *ballet royal*, where Louis XIV., personating Apollo surrounded by the Muses, descended upon the stage, boasting of his power, which knew no submission but that of love. Henrietta then advanced, crowned with roses and myrtle, as Erato, the muse of lovers, and addressed the audience in these appropriate lines :—

“ Mon jeune et royal aspect,
Inspire avec le respect,
Le pitoyable tendresse, &c.”

During the visit to Paris of her eldest sister the widowed Princess Mary of Orange, Henrietta, appeared at the magnificent State ball given by the King. Her mother nourished hopes that Louis XIV. might eventually choose her daughter for his consort, Anne of Austria often declaring “that in case his marriage treaty with the Infanta of Spain were broken he should espouse the youthful Henrietta.” His Majesty, however, for the moment was deeply smitten by Cardinal Mazarin’s niece, Maria Mancini, a plain-looking girl, but remarkably clever, lively, and *spirituelle*. Louis, never caught by mere physical beauty, appeared completely fascinated. On the occasion of a State ball he absolutely refused to dance with the Princess of England, to the visible annoyance of Queen Anne, who indignantly reproached him for his conduct, Louis only replying sullenly from time to time “that he did not like little girls.” But his younger brother, Monsieur Philippe Duc d’Orleans, imagined himself ardently in love with the English princess, expressing an eager desire to have her for his wife. His vanity more than his heart probably prompted him in his suit, for as Henrietta advanced towards womanhood she became the reigning goddess of that courtly Olympus. “The elegance of her person, the rare cultivation of her mind, her amiability of temper, called forth the praises of every one who knew her.” Louis XIV. alone seemed unmoved by her charms.

His politic marriage with the Infanta Maria Theresa soon dissipated the ambitious hopes of Queen Henrietta Maria and the love dream of Maria Mancini, who was at once sent off to a convent. When they met to say adieu, Louis wept.

"What, sire! she exclaimed; "you love me. You weep—and we part?" and she turned her warm gaze upon him with a look of melting entreaty. But his majesty said nothing, and Maria left the Court and eventually became a Princessa di Colonna. It was reserved for the stately *dévôte*, Françoise de Maintenon, to achieve the victory attempted in vain by the coquettish Mazarinette.

Queen Henrietta now received the intimation of Monsieur's wishes with unfeigned pleasure, but there was the important point of dowry for the Princess to be settled by the English Parliament. Time and death meanwhile had been effecting a change in the fortune of the royal Stuarts. The peaceable restoration of Charles II. to his kingdom, without a sword drawn or a drop of blood spilt, occurred at the period when a proposal for his sister's hand was made by Monsieur. The Queen, therefore, determined to speed the negotiation by a visit to England with Henrietta, a journey which mightily annoyed the enamoured Duke, who was joked by Louis XIV. "for his haste in wishing to espouse the bones of the holy innocent," alluding to the extreme fragility of the fair *fiancée*.

Sad and painful memories must have oppressed the heart of the royal widow, Henrietta Maria, when she again beheld the land where she had suffered such bitter trials and reverses! To the young Princess, everything appeared *couleur de rose*. She was now seventeen years old, an age when life and the future seem invested with a thousand delusive hopes and promises of joy. The magnificent welcome given by the nation burst forth like a guerdon for past misfortunes, and a bright harbinger of better days. A *dot* of 40,000 jacobuses was settled upon the Princess by the English Parliament, to whom she returned thanks in a graceful and *naïve* speech, "lamenting that she could not do it so well in the English tongue, but desired," she added, "to supply the deficiency with an

English heart." Pepys records in his diary, "The Princess Henrietta is very pretty, but far below my expectations, and her dressing herself with her hair frizzed over her forehead, did make her seem the much less to me."

Suddenly and sadly the royal visit came to a close by the unexpected death, at Whitehall, of the Princess Mary of Orange, who fell a victim to the terrible scourge of small-pox, an event which so alarmed the Queen for the safety of her darling Henrietta, that she at once commenced her journey back to France. The Princess, however, sickened of the same disease in crossing the channel, and for some hours her life was despaired of. Her recovery is attributed to her own obstinate refusal to be bled, a process which had proved so fatal to her sister of Orange.

Immediately after the arrival of the royal travellers in Paris, the marriage of Monsieur and the Princess took place. An august assembly assisted at the ceremonial, but there were few festivities, it being the season of *Micarème*. *La grande Mademoiselle* praises the manners and appearance of the bride. Without being positively handsome, Henrietta had the air of a great princess. Madame de Motteville thus pictures her : "The Princess was of moderate height; she was graceful, though her shape was really imperfect (she was slightly deformed), but her whole person was engaging on account of her charming manners. Her complexion was fair and delicate, *un teint de rose et de jasmin*, her eyes soft and brilliant; her mouth well shaped, but her extreme thinness threatened a rapid decay of her beauty." This description, however, conveys no idea of that subtle essence of beauty, that nameless charm, which casts its spell over the wisest as the weakest, and which can no more be expressed by words than it can be accounted for by reason. "No man," says the Abbé de Choisy, "could long gaze upon her without feeling the effects. One was interested in her and loved her, without conceiving how it was possible to do otherwise, for she had every quality necessary to be charming." Monsieur for a time believed himself ardently in love with his wife, but those who knew him intimately assert that, while he paid her every attention at first, love was still wanting, for "the

miracle of inflaming *his* heart was not in the power of any woman in the world." This vanity allowed him to form no particular affection save for himself; he was childishly ignorant, malicious in his disposition, and puerile in his pursuits, devoting hours to the adornment of his remarkably handsome person, which he arrayed in a different costume daily.

Mademoiselle de Montpensier relates, that on the death of her father, the Duc d'Orleans, in 1660, Louis XIV., paying her the usual visit of condolence, said, "To-morrow you will see my brother in a mantle that trails. I believe he is delighted with your father's death, which gives him the opportunity of wearing it. I am glad that he was older than I, or the Philippe would have desired my death to gain this satisfaction. In truth," she adds "the next day Monsieur did come with a mantle of *furious* length, and bade me convey a thousand messages to my stepmother about her mourning, which I failed to carry, knowing well she would not heed them." Such was the man to whose keeping the life and happiness of the charming Henrietta were confided. We can scarcely be surprised at the result. Finding neither sympathy nor companionship with her selfish consort, the young Duchesse plunged giddily into the vortex of dissipation presented by the Court of Louis XIV. His majesty, who used to declare "that he should have been desperately in love with his own wife had she belonged to any other man," now took a fancy for his brother's from the hour she graced the royal *cercle* under the name of "MADAME." He vowed "that if he had ever said she was not the most enchanting woman in the world, he was the most unjust man in it." No wonder if Henrietta's head was turned by the conquest of one who had hitherto proved so insensible to her charms. Her caprices and extravagancies knew no bounds. Day after day *fêtes champêtres* were given at St. Germain or Fontainebleau, when Madame presided as Queen, attired in the coquettish garb of a shepherdess, bewildering Louis by the thousand and one *minauderies* a pretty woman loves to practice. The tide of pleasure ran high, and no sign that it would ever recede was then discernible. Loret, in his

Gazette, says : " That the Court went mad with joy, and to describe the number and brilliancy of the *fêtes* would be impossible." These proceedings justly gave great offence to the Infanta Queen, who, of a poor and gentle disposition, yet wanted those more attractive qualities which are necessary, not only to captivate the heart of a king, but those of men ; although never carried beyond the limits of what was then termed "*la belle galanterie*," Madame's flirtation might have resulted in unpleasant consequences had not Louis accidentally overheard the lively chit-chat of the *fille d'honneur* in the arbor at Fontainbleau, when he first discovered the flattering secret of Mademoiselle de la Vallière.

From that moment all else was forgotten. With the selfishness of man, he thought only of the new object of his passion. The touching idyll of her love and sorrow has evoked the sympathy of every tender heart from then until now. Love was the secret of her empire over the king ; she loved the man, and not royalty. A dazzling complexion, fair hair, untouched by powder, a darling mouth, blue eyes full of sweetness, an air of exquisite modesty and refinement ; such was Louise François de la Vallière, when, fatally for her, she first captivated the king. Madame, terribly piqued that Louis should thus openly desert her for one of her own maids of honour, gave way to an excess of ill-humour, wondering "what he could possibly see in such a poor limping *fillette*?" A perceptible limp marred the elegance of Louise's figure, thin almost to attenuation ; but then defects were called "graces" by the infatuated monarch, whose extravagant passion knew no bounds. Henrietta showed herself a thorough woman. Naturally of the sweetest disposition, she was so afraid of inflicting pain, that at times she lacked the necessary firmness required in her exalted position. But on this occasion her gentleness and dignity forsook her. Jealousy is a great leveller. Poor Louise de la Vallière now became the victim of Madame's wounded vanity, which betrayed itself in every device calculated to torture the sensitive nature of one who, though erring, loved virtue while she fell. Henrietta's conduct so transported the king with anger, that for a time there was a complete breach between

them, until at length she condescended to treat Mademoiselle de la Vallière "with the respect due to the object of his Majesty's love." A bitter pill indeed for Madame to swallow, but the will of Louis was law.

New hopes and interests soon occupied the life of Henrietta. On the 27th March, 1662, she gave birth to an infant daughter; the young wife had passionately desired a son. Court gossips go so far as to say that when informed of the sex of her child, she cried out, "Let it be thrown into the river then"; but this could only have been a *facon de parler*, for she loved the little one with maternal fondness. It received the name of "Maria Louisa," in honour of Louis XIV. and Queen Henrietta Maria. After the early death of her mother, this little princess remained with Maria Theresa until her father married again. She and the Dauphin became ardently attached to each other, which led to the idea that she would be his wife. But it suited the policy of her uncle, Louis XVI., to unite her to Charles II. of Spain. When the royal pleasure was announced by Monsieur, Louisa Maria fainted away. All the persuasive eloquence of Bossuet was employed to induce her to submit to her unhappy fate. One day the king, enlarging upon the magnificent alliance he had formed for her, concluded by saying, "What more could I have done for my daughter?" "Ah, sire," replied the reluctant bride, "You might have done better for your niece!"

Charles of Spain was so transported by her delicate beauty, when he first beheld her, that he violated the formality of Spanish etiquette by catching her in his arms, passionately exclaiming, "My queen, my queen!"

After a short married life, embittered by the jealousy of favourites, Maria Louisa was finally poisoned in the flower of her age, thus fulfilling a Stuart's destiny of woe.

The coldness and disunion between Madame and her husband had meanwhile increased with time. These feelings were augmented by evil-minded persons, who did everything in their power to widen the breach. One in particular rendered himself especially obnoxious to Madame, by the impudent authority he assumed in her household, and the undue influence he exercised over the mind of

Monsieur. This was the Chevalier de Lorraine, a handsome, dissipated man, who possessed that passion for intrigue, that tone of secrecy, slander, and lying, which belongs to weak hangers on of weak Courts. The King, now friends again with Madame, deeply sympathised in their domestic grievances; for a trivial offence he readily banished the mischief-making chevalier to Lyons, endeavouring thus to relieve her difficulties. Monsieur, infuriated by passion, hastened to the King, threw himself at his feet, pleading loudly for the return of his favourite, but pleading in vain. The King vented his rage and disappointment upon his luckless wife, treating her with the rudest insolence, sulking for days together, or openly abusing her, declaring that he wished he had never married her, for he hated even the sight of her face. 'Tis a hard task in life for women, that mask which the world bids them wear. Madame bore hers bravely, but underneath was an aching heart. Her sweetness and patience are fully seconded by Elizabeth Charlotte, the second wife of Monsieur, who, in her celebrated memoirs, renders due testimony to the charming qualities of her predecessors. Henrietta's health soon failed under the trying ordeal; she became thinner and thinner, her face grew paler, and she was almost suffocated by a perpetual cough, that allowed her no sleep without the use of opiates. Fears were entertained for her life in her second *accouchement*. The birth of her son, Philip Charles, Duc de Valois, was celebrated with national rejoicings, for the Dauphin, then a very sickly boy, gave but faint promise of ever wearing the crown of France. These ambitious hopes, however, were crushed by Philip's death when only three years old. No words can depict the heart-rending anguish of Madame—even the birth of another daughter failed to console her for her son's loss, although she was keenly sensitive to the most passionate instincts of maternity. From this second princess, Anna Maria, of Orleans, descend the legitimate representatives of Charles I. and the line of the royal Stuarts.

After the sudden death of her much-loved mother, the Queen of England, Madame seems to have devoted her time and attention to politics. We see her henceforth play-

ing the *rôle* of a female diplomatist, exhibiting therein remarkable tact, prudence, and *finesse*, qualities rarely found combined in a royal woman of fashion. She was engaged by Louis XIV. to act as a secret agent between him and her brother Charles II., in their negotiations for breaking the peace with Holland and dismembering that country, which, under the sway of De Witt and his republican co-adjutors, threaten to become too powerful for England. Charles had almost balked the views of Louis by entering into a treaty with Holland and Sweden, well known as the Triple Alliance, which, if his Britannic Majesty had faithfully observed, would have defeated the French designs on the Spanish Netherlands, claimed by Louis in right of his wife. To induce Charles to break this alliance, tempting bribes were offered; a share in the spoils of Holland, a yearly subsidy of £800,000, and, in case he should declare himself a Catholic, assistance against any rebellious outbreak on the part of his subjects. Both monarchs agreed to choose Madame as the medium of their correspondence; her letters display the judgment, united with the caution, rendered imperative by diplomatic jealousy, which guided her in the delicate mission entrusted to her, and we trace therein the presence of those principles which afterwards formed the basis of the celebrated treaty that shattered the Triple Alliance. The most profound secrecy was necessary in these transactions, and observed strictly by Madame, who, amongst her other feminine qualities, possessed that of being, when requisite, a perfect dissembler. Matters, however, seemed likely to come to a standstill through the exorbitant pecuniary demands of Charles, till Louis XIV. determined to expedite affairs by sending Henrietta, with full powers of negotiation, to the Court of Great Britain. Madame had now attained the summit of her ambition—the trusted friend of the two greatest monarchs in Christendom, her influence and power knew no limits. “The King of France is extraordinary kind to Madame, and hath signified it publicly to all. She is adored by the Court here, and unquestionable hath more spirit and conduct than even her mother had, and certainly is capable of the greatest matters.” Thus writes Secretary Dodington, in his official

despatches. Life seemed fair for this cherished Princess, but her delicate health, her past experience, would often remind her how perishable all things are. She could look upon Madame de la Vallière, and watch her declining favor with pity and sympathy. No longer hiding amongst the *filles d'honneur*, Louise was a duchesse, her children bearing the name "Bourbon." But "the humble Violet" suffered by all the magnificence which surrounded her, she keenly felt its shame, while the burning pangs of jealousy were added to her remorse. Her own friend, the brilliant De Montepar, had caught the fickle fancy of the King; from that hour the expiation of Louise de la Vallière commenced, and lasted with patient, heroic endurance for thirty-three years, in a Carmelite's cell.

Monsieur somehow discovered the secret of his wife's intended journey to England. He hinted, therefore, to Louis "that he was well aware of the mysterious business so carefully concealed from him." The King sent instantly for Madame, and reproached her with having betrayed a State secret, but she boldly answered His Majesty, that she had carefully concealed the matter from every one, and Monsieur in particular, "knowing well that he could not be trusted with the merest trifle." Only one other person besides the King of England knew of the affair. This was Marshal Turenne. Louis commanded his presence, and then asked him "if he had revealed the projected treaty against Holland, and Madame's intended journey to England?" "How, sire," stammered the veteran, "does anyone know your Majesty's secret?" "That is not the point," said the King, sternly. "Have you mentioned it?" "I have not breathed a word of Holland," replied Turenne; "but I will confess all to your Majesty. I was afraid that Madame Coatquen, who wished to travel with the Court, might not be of the party; I did but hint to her that Madame might go to England to see the King, her brother. I only said this, that Madame Coatquen might take her measures early, and I ask your Majesty's pardon," he piteously added. The King, beginning to laugh, said: "Then you love Madame de Coatquen, Monsieur?" "Not exactly," replied the old Marshal, blushingly, "but I have a great friendship

for her." "Well, well," said Louis, "what is done is done, but confide no more secrets to Madame Coatquen, for if you love her, I am sorry to tell you she loves the Chevalier de Lorraine, to whom she repeats everything, and he informs my brother."

Monsieur did his best to prevent the journey of Madame into England, but the King at length peremptorily told him "that he would no longer be trifled with in a matter which concerned the interests of France."

The King and Court accompanied Madame as far as Lisle. A most amusing description is given of the royal progress by the lively pen of Mademoiselle de Montpensier. All things were favourable but the weather; the rain fell in ceaseless torrents, and finally broke up and flooded the roads. On approaching Landrecies, where they had intended to sup and sleep, the governor rode up in haste to inform their Majesties that the Sambre had overflowed its banks and carried away the bridge, rendering further progress impracticable. Part of the baggage and attendants had been sent forward, which placed the illustrious travellers in a most melancholy plight. The only shelter found in the storm and rain was an old barn, where the royal family and suite were crowded together in pitiable confusion. There were neither knives, forks, nor spoons to serve the few chickens found for their supper, so that one snatched a leg, another a wing, as they best could manage to clutch any portion of the scanty supply of food. The personal grandeur of Louis XIV. and the exclusiveness of his Spanish Queen suffered terribly from this violation of courtly etiquette, especially when told they must all sleep in the same room, on straw mattresses procured from the peasantry for their use. But weather is no respecter of persons. Tired and worn with the journey, they slept soundly till awoke at four o'clock in the morning by Louvois, the Premier of France, who arrived to inform His Majesty that the roads were now passable. La Grande Mademoiselle makes some malicious remarks on the faded appearance of the Court *belles*, who, without their paint and powder pots, were scarcely recognizable.

Madame was well nigh exhausted with the fatigues and

privations of this weary journey, its restraints, and long ceremonials. When they arrived at Donai a brilliant reception awaited them, and while the civic authorities of the town were addressing a complimentary speech to the Queen, Madame, tired with standing and feeling faint, retired to a corner behind Her Majesty, and ventured to sit down, but the petty pride of Mademoiselle d'Orleans flushed out at the mere idea of the English princess taking such a liberty while she was standing, so she at once flung herself down by her side. This freedom taken in her august presence shocked the sensibility of the Infanta Queen, and she made quick complaint to the King, who took both the royal ladies sharply to task for their dereliction from courtly *règles*. And yet Maria Theresa had borne the disgraceful presence of her husband's *two* mistresses in her carriage without a word or a murmur, a culpable weakness almost as revolting as the infamy of the man who placed them there. Madame, weak in health and depressed in spirits, separated from their Majesties at Lisle, and proceeded to Dunkirk, whence she embarked immediately for England, accompanied by a *suite* of two hundred persons, among whom was the fair maid-of-honour, Louis de Sueranaille, afterwards Duchess of Portsmouth. Dover Castle had been magnificently fitted up for the reception of the King's sister. The lovely weather, the kind welcome, and the freedom from the presence of Monsieur, restored the drooping spirits of Madame; she soon appeared with her wonted brightness and vivacity, making use of her charms with all a woman's art and grace to accomplish the mission entrusted to her by Louis. In this she succeeded beyond the most sanguine expectations. The treaty so detrimental to English interests was signed and sent off to Paris on the 1st June, 1670, Charles, however, released from the article touching his conversion to the ancient faith. It has often been asserted that the Prince of Orange, William the Third, was at Dover with his uncle and aunt, but, though invited, he did not go, probably aware of the nature of the secret treaty for the dismemberment of Holland, still under the authority of the pensionary De Witt, who had excluded the Prince from all authority in the State. But William bided his time, and was unwilling

to become a party to this attack on his native country and future kingdom.

Time passed too swiftly for Madame, the kindness and affection displayed by Charles and his consort, Catherine of Braganza, made her ardently desire a home in England, but the King would not listen to her entreaties to remain, saying, "Much as he loved her it could not be." Before her departure he begged her to leave him one of her jewels as a *souvenir*. Turning to Louise de Quétionaille, who was in attendance, Madame bade her bring the casket from her apartments, when Charles, taking the hand of the fair maid of honor, told his sister "that this was the jewel he coveted." Henrietta, indignant with the royal libertine's conduct, answered him pretty plainly, "that she had received the maiden into her service, and felt bound to protect her from all dishonour, and would most assuredly take her back to France." And Madame kept her word. But soon after her sudden death, Louise returned to England by invitation of the King. Man's weakness is woman's opportunity. Clever, designing, and ambitious, she became the acknowledged mistress of Charles, and played an important part in the political intrigues of his corrupted Court.

With a sad heart Madame embarked for France on the 12th June, concealing her distress under the mask of an assumed vivacity, which broke down into a passion of tears as she looked back on the white cliffs of Dover, and saw them receding swiftly from view. Louis XIV. and his Court received her with every mark of homage and welcome. *Fêtes* and rejoicings celebrated her return, the King desiring to do her honour in acknowledgment of the great work she had accomplished for France. Madame, however, appeared pre-occupied and thoughtful, a shade of melancholy dimmed the usual brilliancy of her wit and spirits, and shortly after, to the surprise of all, she left the Court, and retired to her country home of St. Cloud, where she devoted much time to religious matters, often lamenting to Bousset her past carelessness in these duties. She begged him to admonish and instruct her regarding her salvation. The change in Madame's demeanour was noticed by the

distinguished *cercle* assembled at St. Cloud, consisting of Marshal Turenne, the Duc de la Rochefoucauld, and several English noblemen, in whose intellectual conversation she formerly took the greatest delight. Madame had inherited the tastes of her Medician ancestors for literature and the fine arts, which led her to personal intercourse with many Voltaires of the *belles lettres*. Racine, Corneille, and Molière wrote some of their finest productions at her simple request. But none of her old pursuits now afforded her any pleasure, a fact plainly perceptible to her guests, who ascribed her depression to an excess of *ennui* caused by the unkind conduct of Monsieur, which formed such a striking contrast to the warm welcome she had received in England. Madame, with all her failings, was so frank and gracious in her manners, and so perfect in the minor acts which form an important part of royalty, that she won the hearts of all those who came within the sphere of her fascinations. The pensive mood in one usually so gay, only rendered her more charming, none foreseeing "the coming event thus cast its shadow before."

Henrietta's friend and biographer, Madame de la Fayette, tells us that, arriving at St. Cloud on Saturday evening, the 28th June, 1670, she found her walking alone in the gardens, where she joined her, and they remained talking together in the moonlight till past midnight. On the following morning of the fatal 29th Madame rose early and went to the apartment of de la Fayette, complaining of depression of spirits, and saying she was out of humour, "though the sweetness of her natural temper was such that, in her worst moments, she surpassed most ladies in their best." Turning affectionately to her friend, she said: "If I had always you to talk with I should be happier, but I am so weary of the people about me here that I can scarcely endure them." She soon afterwards accompanied Monsieur to Mass, chatting with her accustomed liveliness. During her absence the Marquis d'Effiat, first equerry to Monsieur, opened the *armorie* in the ante-room, where he knew her plate was kept, and taking out the goblet from which she was accustomed to drink, rubbed it with a paper. While he was thus occupied an officer of her household entered, and said: "Sir, what

are you doing at the *armorie*? And why do you touch Madame's goblet?"

"I was parched with thirst," he replied, "and knowing that water was kept here I came to drink. Perceiving the cup dusty I cleaned it with this paper." The officer observed "That no one was permitted to drink out of Madame's cup," and d'Effiat departed, apparently in a huff.

A few hours subsequently the Court and the nation were startled by the thrilling cry "Madame is dying; Madame will die." At the first tidings of this sad announcement, every one ran to St. Cloud, finding them all in consternation, save the Princess herself. Her thoughts never rested upon life; she never uttered a word of reflection on the destiny which carried her off in the prime of youth; never questioned her physicians; in short, "she alone exhibited a courage of which no example can be found, and which it is difficult to represent." She was approaching that hour which puts the seal on every life—that hour, which even on this side of the grave, is like the opening of the book, through which the secrets of the hearts are revealed. Madame remained true to her noblest self, her gentle heroism endured to the end. Grief and despair prevailed with the King, Monsieur, and the attendants. "It was in vain," exclaims Bossuet in his *Oraison funibre*, "that the husband, and even the King himself, clasped Madame in their encircling arms; they could not preserve her from the touch of death, whose power, mightier than either, rent her from their royal hands." Early on the morning of the 30th June, 1670, Madame expired, amidst the most excruciating sufferings, having just attained her 26th year. She died with the humility of a Christian, the piety of a saint, and the courage of a heroine.

The word "poison" soon began to be whispered on all sides. Restless and uneasy, Louis XIV. at length summoned her *maitre d'hôtel*, Purnow, to a private interview. Surveying him sternly, the King said, in a voice that made him tremble, "If you confess the truth I will pardon you, but if you hide the least thing from me, you are a dead man. Was Madame poisoned?"

"Yes, sire," stammered Purnow.

"By whom was it done? And how?" asked Louis.

"The poison was sent by the Chevalier de Lorraine to the Marquis d'Effiat, sire," replied Purnow, "and he rubbed it in the goblet from which Madame always drank."

In deep distress the King asked: "Was Monsieur aware of the design?"

"No, sire," replied Purnow. "He never can keep a secret, so none dared to tell him," a contemptuous but lucky exoneration.

When the tidings of Madame's sudden death reached England, the mob rose in the streets, calling: "Down with the French," but it did not suit the policy of Charles II. to break with France, so he professed to believe that his sister had died from an attack of *cholera morbus*, as declared by the physicians. The interment was solemnized with regal splendor in the old abbey Church of St. Denis, where Bossuet delivered that memorable discourse which crowned his reputation as a preacher.

Pages might be filled with the sonnets, eulogies, and orations, written on the untimely fate of Henrietta Anne Stuart. "Never was any one," says the witty Lord Rochester, "so regretted, since dying was the fashion." "Madame is dead," awoke tearful echoes in many a heart, as she thus suddenly passed away in the flower of her age, leaving behind that charming portrait of womanhood, which, in spite of its faults and shortcomings, posterity has inscribed on the historic "roll call" of the great and the good.

FANNY POWER COBBE.





SONNETS TO MADAME ADELINA PATTI.

I.

Now, when bright birds with music in each heart
Fly from the far-off dreamlands to our shore,
Thou, with the inspiration of thine art,
Queen of immortal melody! once more
Dost glide like sunrise to the city's gloom,
To touch with sweetness as of that fair Land
Whence first all streams of music from one Hand
Divinely came, the listening hearts of men;
With deeper strains than through the vernal bloom,
The birds of evening through the shadowy glen
Pours tremulously glad, the subject soul,
That dreams alone of beauty and of thee,
Is thrilled, while angel sounds arise and fall
Like showers of sunshine o'er the summer sea !

II.

Nor with thy purity of voice alone
Dost thou exalt and glorify the mind
Of him who feels thy spell. . . Upon the throne
Of Tragedy thy genius unconfined
Hath set thee gloriously, while crowds below
Pour to thine ears the passion of their praise.
Fame is with thee where'er thy footsteps go;
Anticipation fondly hears thy lays.
And when thy song, like some ethereal stream,
Now, glad with rapturous joy's effulgent day,
Now, sweetly sad as twilight when the dream
Of heavenly sunset wanes, has died away,
In Memory's soul thy radiant raptures rise
And fade, like rainbows in the silent skies !

DAVID R. WILLIAMSON.
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THE FOREST OF MELFORD.

A Story of the Day in which we Live.

By A. J. DUFFIELD.

One of the Authors of "Masston; a Story of these
Modern Days," &c., &c.

CHAPTER XII.—*Continued.*

"COME, Miss Newton," said Father Hillen, who was in his natural element, greatly enjoying these melodious sounds set to perfect words. "Sing us the song that suits you best of all. I don't think Arne so happy in his rendering as Haydn was in his, but you will make us all glad to hear you."

Harrie cheerfully complied and sang:

"Where the Bee sucks, there suck I."

"We are all in capital voice to-night," said Papa Hillen, and, going to Estrid, said: "I am sure you know a Shakspeare's song, and that you will sing us one," and he led her to the piano, and she willingly went and sang:

Who is Silvia, who is she

That all our swains commend her?

Holy, fair, and wise is she

The heaven such grace did lend her,

That she might admired be."

"Ah," said the old gentleman, with his gentle flattery, "Schubert wrote that for a man, but no man ever sang it so well. Ethel, come and see if you can help your old father to take his part in this delightful contest."

Ethel, making a few coquettish glances to her father, complied at once, and played very fairly the music of—

"When that I was, and a little tiny boy,
With hey, ho, the wind and the rain."

And the little old gentleman sang it with much naturalness and not a little spirit. The evening, although long, was found to be too short for all. Mrs. Hillen called Mistress Estrid to her side and gave her a kiss, and said that they owed all that beautiful music to her, and that she much wished that she would stay and live with them, and not go back to that luntin Lun'on. "I wad a sang misen," she said, "but I hed a muckle pain in me thrapple" on which she laughed, and Estrid could not suppress a smile.

They all gathered round the dear old lady, who looked very beautiful as she put her arm round Estrid and gave her another kiss: and finally she went off to bed, perfectly happy.

"To-morrow evening I shall expect you all to join us again; Mr. Quicksett, I trust that you have nothing better to keep you away; Mr. Strawless, we shall be glad to see you—and any friend of yours." And with that they all separated for the night, Harriet Newton remaining at Spencer Grove. It was a hospitable house, and no one ever left it without having a strong wish to return.

The next evening, which was that of the day when Strawless visited the Vicar of Wimcote, he and the Rev. Salter Thyme dropped in to the Hillens for some music. Thyme was in capital spirits, and, being greatly pleased at the prospect of considerable activity coming to him in helping to carry out the great schemes of Strawless in Melford Forest, he went to Spencer Grove intending to pass a pleasant evening, for he was a good musician, and could sing well, and behold he fell into a deep pit of trouble, where the sweet pangs of love laid hold of him.

Quicksett, hearing the night before that Estrid was so fond of flowers that she could not pass a day without regret if she missed seeing some of these ornaments of the earth, was up early, and scouring the country for flowers. He passed by some one's garden where he spied a green-house full of bloom. Up to the house he went, and was about ringing the bell when the door opened, and a well-dressed, well fed man of good speech and looks stood before him, in the act of putting on his gloves.

"I beg pardon, I am quite a stranger here, but could you tell me where I could procure a few flowers, the best that can be got; the service would be very great if you could help me?" Quicksett's appearance and manner made a good impression on the owner of the house, who said: "If you will accept some of my flowers I shall be much pleased to give you as many as you like. Will you come this way?"

Quicksett followed the generous speaker, and both went through the hall into the green-house which stood in the garden at the back.

"Help yourself," said the Mulberry gentleman with great goodwill, for he was of Mulberry, and Quicksett did so, making up a beautiful posie of delicate flowers, with sprigs of pentandria daintily stuck in here and there. This he thought would do. He much wished to cut off a few camellias, but hesitated, on which the owner of the flower-house took out his knife, and gave Quicksett a splendid white camellia, and two others which were redder than roses.

Quicksett was in raptures. "How can I thank you," he said. "You will, I hope, allow me to do so whenever I adequately can."

After that the donor of the camellias had made some slight answer Quicksett took his leave, and, on getting outside the garden, he ran all the way to Spencer Grove, and with his compliments sent in his splendid flowers to Miss Fount, who at that moment was breakfasting with Mr. Hillen and Harriet Newton. Ethel was not yet down.

Estrid wore one of the camellias in her hair that evening, and the rest of the flowers Mr. Hillen took and arranged in a crystal vase, which stood upon a small table, which he placed in front of Estrid.

She was thanking Quicksett for his delightful present of the morning, when Strawless and Salter Thyme came into the room. Her beauteous face, chaste with smiles, was more eloquent with thanks than her words could be, and Quicksett thought his flowers but tame and poor beside the face which he was undisguisedly adoring.

Thyme saw all this, and never in his life before had he seen a woman who made him forget all others, and almost to forget himself.

Estrid, without question, was touched with Quicksett's attention. It is probably certain that she was more than touched, for he made no sign of going away, nor she that she did wish him to go. She, on the contrary, began to notice his conversation, the tones of his voice, and some of the things he said she acknowledged with a smile that quickened the lover's tongue as if it had been plied with celestial fire.

Ethel was in the dumps, and by a childish perversity she, in total disregard of Harrie Newton's advice, had dressed herself in a silk dress of two different shades of blue, which made her look cold and more insipid than usual. She took little notice of Estrid, and talked, what Harrie Newton called "bosh," to the young clergyman whom she monopolised.

She persuaded Thyme to sing; but he would consent only on condition that some one else sang first before him. It ended in his consenting to take part in a glee, and then the ice having been broken, music took the part of love, and all went well and happy as the night before. Perhaps more so, and it was well, for there was no return to these concerted sounds, except in the memory of those who cherished them.

"Who was the lady with the flower in her hair?" enquired Salter Thyme of Strawless, as they walked home together.

"She is a London girl—daughter of Mr. Fount. What do you think of the commissioner?"

"He seems very well pleased with himself, I think," said the parson.

"He seemed mighty well pleased with the lady of the beautiful flower," said Strawless. "Shall we ask them to my house while you are here?" he continued.

"Well, do you know," said the young vicar, "I have sounded the Hillens on their coming over to me. Miss Fount, it seems, has a passion for flowers, music, and architecture in the form of beautiful old churches, and Wimcote, you know, is one of the finest in England."

"Very well; when do you think of deciding?"

"I will certainly see about it to-morrow," and the Reverend Salter Thyme that night, instead of staying to

have a final smoke with Strawless, went, late as it was, home to Wimcote. "It was," he said, "such a beautiful moon-light night."

"Well, have something," said Strawless, in dudgeon.

But Thyme had no mind for anything but the cool air and to be alone, so that he might entertain himself with the memory of one whom he for the first time had seen that night, and who inspired him as no other woman had with the thoughts which best become a man when he is most a man.

Quicksett, on taking his leave that night, shook hands with Estrid, and in utter forgetfulness of the others he left the room, without taking any notice either of Ethel, or Harrie, or his host. The effect was visible enough, and it was made apparent to Estrid by the omniscient Ethel, who demanded in her peculiar way, "What have we poor things done that we are not deemed worthy even of a God be wi' you?" on which Estrid took one of the warm-coloured flowers from the vase and placed it in the front of Ethel's dress, and Harriet Newton said that it was beautiful, so did Mr. Hillen, who invited them to come and see him in his room before they went to bed.

When Strawless got home and told his wife all he could about the evening at Spencer Grove, he added that the London girl carried a flower in her hair which must have come from Jim Margreaves's hot-house, for no one but he had such flowers at that time of the year, and how the deuce anybody could have managed that Strawless could not tell.

Margreaves, it appears, was a member of what is known in Mulberry as the Stock Exchange, who prided himself in appearing at business every morning with his button-hole arrayed with some of the finest flowers that Nature, aided by art and Jim Margreaves, could produce.

CHAPTER XIII.

In the eye of love which all things sees
 The fragrance-breathing jasmine trees—
 And the golden flowers, and the sloping hill,
 And the ever melancholy rill,
 Are full of holiest sympathies,
 And tell of love a thousand tales.

They are not all sweet nightingales
 That fill with songs the cheerful vales ;
 But they are little silver bells
 Touch'd by the wind in the smiling dells :
 Bells of gold in the secret grove
 Making music for her I love.

SILVA DE ROMANCES.

THE capricious English weather, which makes and mars so many English schemes, was propitious to our young people. There were riding parties every day, and every day disclosed to some one the growing beauties of Melford Forest. It was becoming a delightful, fashionable resort. One of the afternoon attractions was the ride when the ladies appeared. The fame of Estrid's beauty, her perfect grace in the saddle, the way she wore her hair, and everything she did became objects of attention both to men as well as girls, whether of eighteen or sixty, who lived in the neighbourhood round about.

The only person unconscious of this worship was Estrid, and she would have remained unmindful of it but that Ethel could not bear to see any one so indifferent to attentions, even to well-deserved applause, as Estrid appeared to be, and Ethel would, when she might, act as chorus to her for the whole world. This evil habit was so deeply rooted in this spoilt child that if she could Ethel would have given her blue eyes to be able to tell a rose how sweet it looked, or to make a clematis blush with a consciousness of its own charms. Had she been a nun who had vowed to spend the whole of her days in praising God, or in singing

hymns to the Virgin, she could not have been more devout in carrying out this desire and in gratifying this pernicious taste.

Mr. Fount was quite alive to the incense offered to his daughter. He had intended returning to town at once, but a few more necessary dinners, together with this invitation from Mr. Salter Thyme, detained him, and not unprofitably. He noticed the frequency of Mr. Quicksett's visits to Spencer Grove, and watched diligently to discover if they corresponded to anything in the conversation of his daughter. He talked much with Quicksett, whom he was pleased to find was a gentleman, unsinged by any Mulberry fire; and he learned much more than had Mr. Strawless what Quicksett was about, and what sort of a report he would make to the Higher Powers on Melford Forest.

Estrid took a pleased note of her father talking frequently and long with Arthur Quicksett, and Quicksett discovered for the first time from Mr. Fount that the lord of the manor of Melford and Wanstone was Lord Paramont.

"I wish you would look over a plan I have of the Forest, and tell me any particulars you can of the properties which are there marked in," said Quicksett one morning to Estrid's father.

"I shall be glad to help you," said Mr. Fount. "You are, of course, aware that I act for Lord Paramont?"

"I was not aware," said Quicksett, cordially. Then they made an appointment to examine the plan of Mulberry Forest, which at present was in the hands of Mr. Strawless.

"O, Strawless," said Fount. "Yes; a very safe man I should think."

"I suppose there is no doubt of it," answered the commissioner, lightly. "He has recently been appointed agent by the other lords of the manor."

On which remark Mr. Fount gave Quicksett a searching glance, but discovered nothing to convince him that that young gentleman was speaking in anything but a perfectly natural sense.

"By-the-way, might I ask if you are to be at Wimcote to-morrow? I should be glad to have a further talk."

Quicksett was "not quite sure" if he could go.

"I hope you may," said the other, and with that the two parted, and thereupon Quicksett resolved that to Wimcote he would not go. He had certainly thought of going, and until Fount had put that question to him there was no doubt in his mind on the subject—now he was very much in doubt.

The Vicar of Wimcote, as we have seen, was good-looking, pleasant, and gentlemanlike. Moreover, he had an income of more than a thousand a year, a very desirable establishment, a much-envied position in society, and was courted and liked by all the country round, by gentle as well as simple ; and he could ride a horse as well as he could drink delicious wines, and come very near to speaking the truth.

Arthur Quicksett lived in lodgings in London, with an income dependent upon his health—which certainly was excellent—and the influence of his friends. No ; he thought that he would not accept the Vicar's invitation to Wimcote ; he had better stick to his work, and get it done as best he could.

The Vicar of Wimcote received his guests like one accustomed to dispense the rights of hospitality. But Ethel was certain that it was all done for nothing but as a trap to catch Estrid. The flowers that met them at every turn in every room of the charming vicarage, on the table which was spread for lunch, in the room prepared for the ladies, in the library, in the dairy even, in the church, which had been warmed for the occasion, and where a carpet had been put down in the middle aisle, and there also was the organist playing some of Mozart's masses. Happily Ethel kept her thoughts to herself. It cannot be denied that Estrid was greatly pleased, and she talked much with her father, who walked with her, giving her his arm, and he, too, could see at a glance that the Rev. Salter Thyme was minded to make love to his daughter.

They proceeded to the church through the Vicar's ivy-clothed walk while lunch was preparing. They were yet a little way off when a strain from the organ lodged in Estrid's ear, and so enchanting was it that she stood still to listen, so did all the others, the Vicar steadfastly regarding the face of Estrid as she stood thinking of, and feeling nothing but,

the divine enchanting ravishment which had taken Estrid captive. And as she thus stood her soft, brown eyes filled but did not overflow, and on her lips was a slight tremor as if they had just been kissed. All this the Vicar was privileged to see, and no priest was ever so ready or willing to bow down before "the Virgin of the cloudless sky" as Thyme was then ready to bow in worship before Estrid.

"Though that may seem a trifling thing,
Yet by that very deed the maid
Did from her heart the curtain fling
Which veil'd her secret thoughts in shade."

At least so thought Thyme, but he was mistaken. We know that it is only from the insane that tears are withheld, and that when these fertilizing waters are seen to flow from them we know also that reason has returned. Tears belong perhaps to our finest selves, to which music, or some forgotten sweetness of thought or feeling suddenly remembered, has power to affect, hence Estrid's tears. With this trinity of perfect loveliness, music, flowers, architecture, did the Vicar of Wimcote seek to woo the heart of Estrid, and it is true that she alone appeared to be solemnly yet graciously moved. Ethel pouted, and looked at the monuments on the church walls. Harriet Newton admired the windows, but in Estrid there was an all-subduing power of love produced by an influence which was unseen, but which was shown in the grace of her noble figure and her happy silence.

If it had been designed this wily young Vicar could not have more deeply laid his schemes to catch a beautiful soul (as an old German once called Estrid) than when, leaving the church, he conducted her and the rest through a field in which were several young animals and a fine cow. It was a happy transition, and perfectly in keeping, to come from the ideal atmosphere of the blessed into the real society of the sinless young.

After lunch they mounted and rode back to Mulberry and Spencer Grove, and the young parson rode with them; and because Mr. and Mrs. Hillen could not do enough to repay Estrid for the loving care with which she had once nursed their one child through a dangerous illness, they prepared a

dinner, and invited as many as they could to meet the lady whom they loved, to whom they owed so much, and the Rev. Salter Thyme found himself invited, on his arrival with the rest at Ethel's home, to stay and dine.

On this the Vicar of Wimcote sent off a messenger on horseback to the Vicarage, who was bidden to fly there and back and to bring a large basket of the finest flowers that the conservatory could supply.

"We have had a delightful day," said Thyme to Mrs. Hillen; and that jocose and perfectly natural old lady replied that he, Salter Thyme, must ha' bin a feckless cauf if he had found the day gone otherwise; and then she went to see that Estrid's maid was on duty.

The dinner included Henry Mackworth, who, whether on account of natural shyness or ill-health, had not been seen so frequently of late at Spencer Grove. Mackworth would not, in all probability, have received any notice from Mr. Fount if his daughter had not taken so much interest in him; and seeing Estrid, who sat next to Mackworth, frequently engage the attention of that earnest, anxious face, her father enquired his name, and learned other things regarding him.

The flowers from the Vicarage arrived in time to help their donor in his designs, and with a free hand he distributed them over the dinner-table, appropriating the maid's glasses in a manner that for a moment threatened grave disaster to his plan. But Salter Thyme knew well how to propitiate a maid; besides, at Spencer Grove it was quite customary for visitors to take some such little liberty as this of decorating the dining-room on the spur of the moment. Ethel came in while it was going on, and a little pleasantry passed between her and the parson. She even volunteered to make up a special bouquet to be placed in front of Estrid; for, of course, she knew where Estrid would sit. She was greatly indebted to him, Ethel said, and when they came into dinner she drew Quicksett's attention to Estrid's posy, reminding him with some archness that he was not the only person in the world who knew how to arrange flowers.

"Papa!" she exclaimed, after they were all seated, "You do not take the slightest notice of my flowers," and she

looked at Thyme with the coolness of an accomplished thief; and he, for the life of him, could not help giving way to a smile and a bow to Ethel's blue and shining eyes.

"My dear," said her father. "whose paradise have you been robbing?"

"Don't be alarmed, papa: I got them by telegram from Covent Garden."

"Oh, yes, the wires run through Wimcote, don't you know," said one.

And the Vicar looked steadily into his plate, and not by the involuntary movement of a muscle did he betray either Ethel or himself.

The smallest happy incident will sometimes serve as a key note to a dinner, and this of the flowers gave a pleasant tone to what very frequently is nothing but a time of discontent and jarring chords, especially when two or three unknown people happen to be present. Not even a dinner-party, however, could be dull or otherwise than agreeable and even brilliant with Adrian Fount, Arthur Quicksett, and Salter Thyme dispersed judiciously among several delightful girls, all presided over by Mr. Stanley Hillen.

After dinner the parson, in a happy frame, and thoroughly satisfied with his evening, went to call on Strawless, whom he found alone in his dining-room in close proximity to some rare bottles, which contained still more rare liquids, and a wooden box of no pretension to style in its construction, but which contained some perfumed leaves of the tropics rolled up and ready for a pleasant sacrifice.

"Where's the wife?" began Thyme.

"Gone to bed," said Strawless. "Sit in. So you've been dining with the Londoners. How do you find them?"

"Delightful people," said the parson, lighting up. "This," he continued "will be the last cigar, and this," filling a tumbler with water and some deep gold-coloured liquor, "the last go of brandy I shall ever take. I renounce them all. I would renounce you, but it has now become my duty to look after you, and from time to time report you to the angel of Mulberry," and the good-tempered clerical wag sat down, looked Strawless in the face, and waited for a reply...

"What's up?" Strawless began.

"I'm in love," answered the other, and he made his confession with much seriousness, mingled with free comments on himself.

"Then," said Strawless, "you had better get out of it, for no fellow tells his love in that fashion who isn't about to make a fool of himself."

"I know," Thyme answered. "But it so happens that there's no one else but you for one to talk to, and I am compelled to use words which you can understand."

"Come, come," said Strawless, pointing his cigar at Thyme.

"Strawless, old man," the young Vicar went on in great enthusiasm, "she is not only beautiful, she is so thoroughly good. No woman could sing as she sings without having the soul of an angel and the heart of a woman who lives by loving——"

Strawless, who knew well enough to whom the parson referred, said, helping himself in order to join his companion, "Well, who is she?"

"She has scarcely spoken to me, and yet for her sake I am going to give up the society of the low and the vulgar. I'll keep only one horse. I'll sell all my cellar and give it to the poor. I'll——"

The rest was drowned in a laugh from Strawless as loud as a peal of bells, who said, "That'll do, old fellow."

"Yes, I know," said Thyme, "she is far too good—too great for me, and perhaps no one knows it better than she, except myself."

Strawless looked at him, his lips shining in the rosy light of the fire, his face heated with the good things he had swallowed, and at last, seeing Thyme relapse into a thoughtful mood, said :

"What do you think of her father?"

"He is a gentleman," was the reply, "and I like him, if only for the exquisite care and attention he pays to his daughter. He must be a man of most refined taste."

"Plenty of taste, I dare say," said Strawless; "but what about the tin?"

"I don't want any," said Thyme, "nor does she care for

it. What she wants is some one to love, and love always ; something to do, the doing of which will unfold the love of her own nature. Love is the breath of her soul, and she wants to be there where she can give and partake of what is vital to her."

"I know," said Strawless. "Well, suppose all that, who is her father?"

"What do I care who he is or what he is?"

"Perhaps you had better take care," said Strawless, looking as wise as an owl. "If the girl doesn't care for money (and you only guess that, you know), that may be strong evidence that her father cares too much about it."

"Mas sabe el necio en su casa, que el cuerdo en la agena," drawled out Salter Thyme.

"What's the good of throwing Latin at me?" exclaimed Strawless.

"It is not Latin."

"Well, it is not English, and it isn't manners," said the other.

"The fool knows what is best to be done in his own house, than the wise in the house of his neighbour," said the parson.

"Well, don't be a fool," said Strawless, mollified.

"Will you give me a bed?" asked the Vicar.

"Of course, old boy," and those were the last words that these two exchanged with each other that night.

Jack Newton went to Spencer Grove to fetch his sister, and he, Harrie, and Quicksett, walked home together. Jack did not care for dinner parties, he said, although Tom Strawless declared that his leaving Quicksett so much alone with his sister was only a dodge of his, and that this and not the other was the reason of his not going out with her so much as he ought. All the Strawlesses appeared to be well instructed in what other people's duty consisted.

Mr. Fount finished his evening with Mr. Hillen in his own room, and Estrid's father was able to learn much from the father of Ethel.

Ethel and Estrid remained long after the others had gone to bed, seated in front of the fire in the drawing-room as if they were at a pic-nic, and Ethel entertained her friend with

anecdotes of their common acquaintance. How Mackworth was known for his unostentatious charities, the good which he did in Mulberry, where his father had made all his money. How Quicksett once rode a race with Harrie Newton, and continued to ride with her every day, all people being persuaded that it was a match, and it was well known that Jack Newton much wished his friend Quicksett to marry his sister. How Salter Thyme was connected with the aristocracy in some way, was originally intended for the army, but the living of Wimcote becoming vacant just in the nick of time he took orders, and his uncle, who is patron of Wimcote, presented him. "It is worth more than a thousand a year, my dear."

"What did you say your friend Mr. Quicksett wished with regard to the Forest of Melford?" inquired Estrid, who had listened with too much patience to Ethel's chatter.

"He has," was the reply, given like one who had some private knowledge of her own—albeit she received it from her father: "he has hopes of moving the Government to restore it, at least what there is left of it, to the people, and he says, I believe, that all our houses are built on ground which does not belong to us. [Here she laughed and opened wide her eyes.] Papa thinks him somewhat enthusiastic. But I like enthusiastic men."

"Shall we go to bed now?" said Estrid.

Then these two kissed each other and went to bed, but neither of them had much sleep before the dawn of the morning. A storm of wind and rain raged in the sky, which descended upon the forest and made great havoc among the trees; and the bellowing of a south-westerly gale, as is well known, will sometimes rob even the eyes of the young of their natural sleep.

CHAPTER XIV.

"The Appellation of Gentleman is never to be affixed to a Man's Circumstances, but to his behaviour in them. The Courtier, the Tradesman, and the Scholar, should all have an equal Pretension to the Denomination of a Gentleman. That Tradesman who deals with me in a Commodity which I do not understand with Uprightness has much more Right to that Character than the Courtier who gives me false hopes or the Scholar who laughs at my Ignorance."

SIR RICHARD STEELE, in the *Tatler*.

August 5th, 1709.

WHO is Margaret? The careful reader of course knows how to answer that demand, but no one else knows, except Stephen Bond, not even Margaret herself. The question slowly began to assume a deepened colour from the first day that she was seen by Strawless—it had incidentally occurred to Lord Paramont, but so delightfully occupied was he with Margaret herself that he did not care to know who she was or where she came from—and in all probability the question would never have arisen to any one had Estrid not appeared on the scene. What the reader does not fully know is, who is Stephen Bond, and if a man can only be known by his works, it becomes necessary to tell some of the things which Stephen has done, and which have helped to weave the mingled web of this history. We have been told that he was the late Lord Paramont's business man. But the business which Stephen did was of a circumscribed character, it involved no transaction in Lombard Street or Capel Court, it was chiefly of a personal nature, such as one man gets another to do for him when he is in need of a trustworthy, loyal, uncorruptible witness and friend. Stephen Bond, for the love his master bore him, lived in Lord Paramont's house, not as a servant but as a companion. It suited Lord Paramont's way of life to have a home, but not to live much in it, and what there was of a real home in that house, Stephen Bond was the maker of it. The little orphan lord was brought up there for one thing, and Stephen was his first guide and governor.

The principal monetary transactions of a purely business order, which Stephen conducted for Lord Paramount, were in connection with monies borrowed on the Melford lands, or on account of the sales of lands in the Forest of Melford directed to be made by the lord of the manor. Peter Chetwon had been the sole steward of these lands, who measured and meted out such as were sold, or mortgaged to various Mulberry people, and other people not of Mulberry. Peter never received any of this money, it was always paid into Stephen Bond's account: sometimes direct, now and then through attorneys, but this latter way of payment was very seldom used. Any land with the sale of which a solicitor had anything to do, would be a portion of those manor lands of which Paramount was undoubtedly lord. It must be understood that Chetwon knew nothing to the contrary of the whole of Melford Forest belonging to the Paramount family. It is also perfectly well known to some of us, that some thirty years since land was not what land has now become. Land was pretty much in the condition which the church was in half a century ago,—it was low, no one cared much for it for its own sake, and as for the conveyance of land, or the wrongful appropriation of it, there was no one to care except those who were immediately concerned in it, and all who could did what was right in his own eyes in that matter. The College Dons, who were lords of some of the Melford lands, forgot all about them, or did not much care for them. The trustees of Mulberry School, who were responsible for the preservation of other portions of the Forest, went to sleep over their trust, and perhaps Lord Paramount would have been equally heedless, but that he was oftentimes greatly in need of money, and unconsciously, but none the less really, Stephen Bond and Peter Chetwon became the chief agents by whom these monies were raised, and thus the lands of the people, the lands of Petroleum College, the lands of the old Grammar School of Mulberry, as well as other lands, passed into the private possession of several rich men—men who had a faculty for looking a little way into the future. Among these were the father of Henry Mackworth and Michael Strawless, Mr. Stanley Hillen on his own account, and Jim Margreaves on his, together with

a few others, and these men speedily forgot the methods by which they acquired their acres. In the case of Stanley Hillen it must be said that whatever of wrong appertained to the conveyance to himself of Spencer Grove he knew nothing. Nor is he the first man who has rightfully bought lands from the wrong owner: And it must be confessed that in this business of the cheap purchase of other people's property, the spirit of the time and the ways of some unscrupulous men, much helped the buyers to cover with oblivion that which they desired to forget.

"Stephen," said Lord Paramont one morning, as he stood with his back to a fire in a small warm room in Arlington Street, Piccadilly, "this little one is mine, her mother is now married—and it is my business to take care of the child, of which she made me a present. Very pretty, isn't she? Not a bit like me—awfully like her mother, though."

Then his lordship put his delightful cigar into his mouth and looked at Bond, who wore a face of pity and concern: for Stephen sat in profound silence and gazed at the sweet little one who was playing on the rug, all unconscious of being the object of many personal remarks.

"What shall we do with her, Stephen?"

Stephen, after looking with increased interest at the child's movements said: "Give her to me."

"By God, Bond, you are the only man I ever cared for. We will take her to Melford," said his lordship, becoming quite affectionately warm, at least, as warm as it was in his nature to be.

Again he stopped, and smoked and thought, now keeping his eye on the child, and now on Stephen, who had taken Margaret on his knee.

"Can we get ready by two o'clock?" enquired, at last, Lord Paramont.

"That," said Stephen, "will depend on my being able to procure a proper nurse for——"

"For Margaret," said the graceless one, "what do you say to the Spanish nurse whom I brought over?"

"I think you had better send the Spanish nurse back," said Stephen. For at that moment Margaret had put up her tiny hand to Stephen's face, she smiled as only the

very young can smile—she turned herself round on his lap, then she climbed up his waistcoat, when she again sat down and deliberately took out his watch. In short, she took Stephen Bond into custody more completely than she could have done had she been thirty instead of less than three years old.

So they took her to Melford, and after that Mrs. Chetwon had received the little one from Bond, he and Lord Paramont strolled outside the Croft to have a look at things.

"This," said his lordship to Stephen, pointing to a well defined part of the forest, close to Wanstone Croft, "I shall give to you for yourself and Margaret."

"Very well," said Stephen, and said nothing more.

"The darling liitle thing," Mrs. Chetwon was saying to Margaret, as Stephen returned inside; for Margaret's steady eyes of beauty looked more like some uncommon jewels rather than common instruments of vision—and there was much love-making between the child and her newly-found mother.

The incident which next occurred, small though it be, is worthy of record—this was the entrance into the room of a giant, who stood about three feet two, chubby, domineering, imperious, and who deliberately went and looked at Margaret, "like an old one," as his mother said.

This was George Chetwon, only son of Peter and Bridget Chetwon, who probably believed what they told him about Margaret having been found in the forest, as he had been found by the doctor in a parsley bed, five years before, and brought in a piece of brown paper while his mother happened to be asleep.

Not very long after Margaret had become a permanent member of the Chetwon family, Stephen Bond left London and took up his abode in Mulberry as permanent Director of the "*Sphere Life Insurance Company*," which was composed of ship-owners and ass-drivers, who agreed to make good the loss of a ship or an ass which any of the Company might sustain, and Stephen Bond's post was a very responsible post to fill, requiring much tact, a calm judgment, a firm, but at the same time, kindly disposition, and a character of unsullied integrity. All these attributes did

Stephen possess, and for that matter he possesses them still. This was all the stock-in-trade which Stephen brought into his new calling. But it has proved to be of great profit to himself and to others.

Stephen's one peculiar habit, noticed by a few Mulberry people, was that of riding at certain fixed times to the Forest of Melford. Wet or dry, cold or warm, as the day might be, Stephen never failed to visit the Croft at the stated time. It was thus that he watched over the growth of Margaret, until Margaret was taken by him to Brussels and placed in the home and school of Madam de Pomperlain, where she remained until quite lately. Even while Margaret was away, Stephen still kept up his daily rides to the Croft. It was through his influence that George Chetwon went to Mulberry School, and during that time George lived in the house of Stephen Bond.

By the time that Margaret was being prepared by Madame de Pomperlain to return to England, George Chetwon was a full-grown handsome fellow, but one year younger than when we saw him for the first time in the fourth chapter of this new history. When Margaret did return, she came to Mulberry to her uncle, Stephen Bond, and she learnt to call Mr. and Mrs. Chetwon father and mother when Margaret became the betrothed of George Chetwon.

George Chetwon was the pupil of Stephen Bond in habits, in manners, and ways, and if Stephen trained this future husband of Margaret, and trained him specially to fill that office and ministry, then we should be glad to hear of his undertaking to train in like manner as many English lovers who are thinking of becoming husbands as he can conveniently accommodate, and do the same for them as he did for George.

It would be grateful work to the writer of this outline of George Chetwon's life to set down some of the chief incidents of his courtship of Margaret. But the time would fail and we should be diverted from other interesting people whose courtships are not so far advanced as that of George, and to which, therefore, much more attention must be paid. But to show the temper of these two lovers, and the result of Stephen's training of one of them, let us

relate one little incident, which only a short while ago took place between Margaret and George.

After Margaret had become quite at home with Lord Paramont, whom she came to treat as a brother—albeit Lord Paramont looked upon Margaret in a very different light to that of a sister—and the two rode much in the forest together, and together rambled over the farm, and often about the ruins of Melford Abbey; one day, when she and the young lord had returned home somewhat late, and George had also returned late from Mulberry to find that Margaret was still abroad, when she did at last arrive the following little scene occurred:—

George, (standing upright as one who is about to sing a difficult song,) demanded of Margaret, in a high key, “Where have you been?”

Margaret, who likewise looked as if the song was to be a duet, and she had to bear an obligato part, replied in the same note, “With a gentleman,” in a quick, but thoroughly determined way, and they looked at each other. On which George took her in his arms and said, in a soft, but manful voice, “Consider that you are with none other now,” and he kissed her. George had been nourished on a plentiful supply of fresh air and honest work, and had acquired that perfect self-control which belongs to the perfect soldier or the perfect sportsman.

When Estrid’s father delivered the packet from the late Lord Paramont to Stephen Bond, George and Margaret were in a condition to marry at any moment. Everything was arranged, and perhaps for the first time in a long series of years Stephen Bond was able to indulge in a dream of unassailable quiet and repose. One or two debts of honour of the late Lord Paramont remained unpaid; Stephen was not responsible for these debts, yet it is equally true that the money had been lent through and on account of Stephen’s character, nor could the late lord have raised it himself on any terms from the men who lent it, any more than he could have raised the dead. Stephen could now pay off these debts, and he resolved so to do. Margaret, in marrying George Chetwon, would be amply provided for, and Stephen could look for-

ward to a serene close of his own life, when the curtains might be drawn, the candles lit, the hearth swept, and the close of his day be unruffled and warm, and full of gracious content. It is, therefore, not to be wondered at when Fount delivered Lord Paramont's packet to Bond, that Stephen's fine face should be covered with an expression of pure joy.

Land was now selling at high prices, and Stephen Bond's eighty freehold acres, with undisturbed claim for nearly twenty years, with ample testimony of this being the case, together with the conveyance to him in Lord Paramont's own hand, would insure Stephen at any time a matter of not less than thirty thousand pounds.

Did the late Lord Paramont never make mention of Margaret's name? The answer is that he never did, even to the extent of one poor enquiry after her existence. He was for one thing, a man who would not allow any liberty to be taken with him, not even by that unseen and perfectly respectable entity that lived with him, slept with him, and even now and then slept while Paramont was wide awake—a thing, a being, a principle, or, what you will, that can make a man a coward, and, under certain conditions, leave him more than naked though locked up in steel. What Lord Paramont did think about, in connection with Margaret, was the piece of land which he had promised to bestow upon her and Stephen Bond. It was not Lord Paramont's land to give. It belonged to the College of Saint Petroleum, and perhaps, because the graceless lord could get no money on it, in revenge on his best friends he gave the land away, and his right to do so consisted solely in the destruction of all record of the rights of others. He deferred that act as long as he could; it was the very last deed of his wicked life, and, bad as it was, it was the best he ever did, or was capable of doing; but in doing it he thought not of Margaret, and if any record of her had remained on his brain he would have destroyed even that.

Stephen Bond must have known, at least, something quite sufficient of Lord Paramont's character, and way of life, to make him a participator in his crimes. Of that, some readers of his life will remain always convinced, say what.

or be, or do what Stephen will. And yet Stephen Bond knew nothing of either one or the other, nor was he the only person thus ignorant of the doings of a man whose chief anxiety was to keep his deeds a profound secret. But it is argued that no man can take a child from her natural father without condoning the offence which procured her existence. A man like Stephen Bond, who was selected a permanent director of a Life Insurance Company in Mulberry, on account of his fitness to fill the post, could not have been so great a fool as not to know, that in serving Lord Paramont in the matter of the little Margaret, he was simply feathering his own nest, or he expected that it would be sufficiently well-feathered by others, and that by a craven, crawling sycophancy, he was simply procuring his own advantage and prosperity in the world.

Alas for all of us, the existence of a profoundly unselfish, childlike, guileless, and compassionate man, is becoming every day less possible to conceive. "It is a hard case," and there is not a single soul living, at least in *Vanity Fair*, that can understand or receive it.

Stephen Bond never thoroughly believed that Lord Paramont would keep his word concerning the eighty acres, and when his will was read, and no mention of Stephen's name was found, or of the promised land, the first thought which struck Stephen's heart, and warmed it, was for the little maid whom he had cared for, and who was indebted to no one but himself for all the good she enjoyed in the world. When Fount delivered the dead lord's letter, Stephen's first thought was about the debts of honour Lord Paramont had left unpaid and unprovided for, and which Stephen could now discharge. And that will make the case much harder for the fine people of *Vanity Fair* to believe, to resolve, or even to report.

Stephen now desired to sell his land, for the time was propitious. The first person to whom he mentioned his willingness to do so, was Jim Margreaves, as he was called, and Jim Margreaves began to make his own enquiries and to indulge in a little quiet speculation, common to some of the best of Mulberry men.

It being now clearly set forth who Margaret is, as well as

the happy fate which awaits her, and who is Stephen Bond, and the part which he has played in Margaret's life, we may take a walk through the old town of Mulberry, and try and ascertain for ourselves how it came to pass that Estrid took a very warm interest in the welfare and ill-fare of some of its grimy, stunted, and defrauded people. Not because there remains anything new or heroical to be said of so common and multitudinous a crew, who have been much compared to grass, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, but rather because of the effect which the condition of some of these human creatures produced on Estrid herself, who was heard to say in response to that figure of the grass, "Truth, my lord, yet the grass gives a wonderful beauty to the great trees which tower above it."

(*To be continued.*)





THE DEATH RIDE.*

Two travellers ride across the wold,
The night is dark, the air is cold,
An anxious sire and his only child,
With grey eyes cowering strange and wild.

“ Why hid’st thou thy face, my son, with fear ?
No harm can befall thee whilst I am near :
Look up, boy ! look up ! I’ll quicken our rein,
And with speed of the swallow we’ll scour the plain.”

“ Oh, father ! dear father ! close, closer cling,
In the distance I see the Alder King,
With his ashen visage, and spectral crown,
Waylaying our course to drag me down.”

“ Folly, my boy ! you fancy, or dream,
Or it is but some ignus-fatuous gleam—
Some thing of the mist to lure astray,
The benighted wanderer on his way.”

“ Hear’st thou not, sire, the strange, strange sound
Of a voice low breathing here around ? ”
“ I hear no sound but the winds weird moan
Down in the hollows of Heighgelstone.

* Freely rendered from the German of Goethe.

“ But listen ! he speaks.” *Come, child of earth !
To our fairy realms of joy and mirth :
My daughters three, who their revels keep.
Shall lull thee with song this night to sleep.*

“ Illusion ! you suffer from fever-fright—
The nurse shall watch by your couch to-night.”
“ But, look there ! ” “ Well, well, on nought do I look,
Save some willow-boughs bending over the brook.”

“ Oh, father ! dear father ! can you not see
The demon-monarch’s fair daughters three,
Pirouetting with footsteps fleet
In front of our horse’s nimble feet ? ”

Closer, and closer, the boy is presst
With a loving arm to his father’s breast.
Their two hearts meeting in unison melt,
As the grip of the Alder King is felt.

When the steed stands still, and the castle gate
Opens to those who without do wait.
A wail of distress on the air doth swell,
And the warder tolleth a muffled bell.

G. LINNÆUS BANKS.

TEXTS FROM TENNYSON.

No. 6.

“I hold it true whate'er befall,
I feel it when I sorrow most,
'Tis better to have loved and lost,
Than never to have loved at all.”

In Memoriam, xxvii.

JT is becoming fashionable to be matter-of-fact. There is no time for sentiment now-a-days. Life is a comedy, not a drama. The stage, says Shakespere, holds the mirror up to Nature. It is, at any rate, a certain reflex of the spirit of the times. What do the public flock to see? Farce, burlesque, and opera bouffe. There is never a tragedy or drama produced of any merit but is immediately parodied—cleverly sometimes, no doubt—and the emotions portrayed are held up to ridicule and contempt. Who are the most popular—I was going to say dramatists—writers for the stage of to-day? Taylor and Wills, or Byron, Gilbert, and Burnand? Run your eye down “under the clock” and see, if you are in doubt. Who that has witnessed a performance of any of the works of one of the trio, can fail to observe the effect on the vast audience, of the absurd views that are given of all the most ennobling traits in human nature. Down with false sentiment by all means. It is a trap over a stinking sink of cant and iniquity, and the sooner it is taken up and the drain purged, the purer and sweeter will everything around become. But there are people, and their number is increasing, who would admit no particle of feeling whatever into the hard and miserable mockery of life that they lead, who would never own to the possession

of a heart that beats with tender emotions or is susceptible of sympathy and love, and whose boast it is, that they can pass through ordeals by fire and water with undisturbed equanimity and unflinching countenance. Such people are undeniably unnatural, the character they would present is an assumed one, and if they endeavour to believe it is not, they only add to their other errors that of self-deception.

Daily intercourse with the world no doubt tends to deaden the affections. A commercial life, with its continual brain to brain struggles, its avaricious tendencies, its disregard of all but first personal interests does not allow of much exercise of sentiment. Each year the aspect of commerce is changing, and money making is more and more assuming an aspect not at all cheering to a good citizen. Speculation is the root of modern commerce, and speculation is nothing but an extensive and "honourable" system of gambling. The winner gains at the expense of the loser, but what does he care; he may lose himself to-morrow and who will trouble about his losses. What are another man's affairs to him? Each one for himself and God help the fallen; man won't. "It is the way of the world," is becoming a much bandied saying, but the way of the world wants mending, my friend, and unless you personally lend a hand it will only get worse and worse in repair, and we shall not soon be able to travel along it at all.

There are two mental recreations that every right-minded man, whose common sense is not blinded by bigoted puritanism, must acknowledge to be the most invigorating and healthy of all purely intellectual amusements, namely, the witnessing of a well-written and well-acted play, and the reading of a wholesome novel. By a play, I don't mean the exhibition of padded legs, and as much of the rest of the female body as the Lord Chamberlain will allow—English taste, if it were honest, would welcome nakedness altogether,—with a few spicy songs and suggestive dances thrown in by way of variety, but a stage play in the proper acceptance of the word, as Shakespere, Johnson, Sheridan, Lytton, and Robertson recognised it. From the list of wholesome novels, I would not exclude those popularly styled "Sensational," for it is the sensation that supplies the

stimulus that invigorates the brain weary from continued and unrelaxed application upon one object, but I should think twice before I admitted into the category the majority of the so-called religious novels, or novels with a moral or a purpose. Now, we hear, as we move about, a great many objections raised to both the drama and the work of fiction by folks, for the most part, utterly incompetent to express an opinion on either. The most rabid opponents of the stage are found amongst those who have never entered a theatre door ; and I always put down a man who condemns novel reading as one who has never read a romance in his life. I remember once having been asked to give a lecture at a Young Men's Institute, in connection with which there was a library. I chose for my subject "The Authors of the Victorian Era," and endeavoured to stir up the interest of my hearers to study the works of the great men of their time. On examining the large collection of books in the library I could not find a single work of fiction ; there was no volume of Tennyson's, nor of any of the Victorian poets ; the only modern authors represented were Spurgeon, Ward Beecher, Talmage, and about half-a-dozen quite unfamiliar names, all very well in their way, but rather monotonous literature to young men with active, expanding minds. We cannot always be eating strawberry jam, although we may consider it very nice. What was my amazement when I could not even find a copy of Shakespere. After that discovery I did expect a very hearty welcome for my lecture from the heads of the little Institute, for in it I had a good bit to say about Shakspere. After it was over, this is what I overheard one of the good deacons say, "Shakespere, sir, was a dissolute vagabond. I once had to wait two hours in a waiting-room, there was no Bible there, but some one had left a copy of Shakespere, but sir, rather than read the profane pages I spent the time in looking at the rain through the window." Profitable amusement. Here was a man expressing his opinion upon works he had never even glanced at, who set himself up to guide others, with the result, that those who came under his influence were stunted and deformed in their intellectual growth, bigotted in religion, and of little service to themselves or their fellows. I say emphatically, that the effect

of reading nothing but the works I found in that library, would be to render the readers' minds morbid and narrow, and in the end they would do far more injury than is attributed by these worthy elders to Dickens, Thackeray, or Braddon. For myself, I can only see one objection to the drama and the novel, and it is the one that affects any subject. Witnessing a play or reading a romance, our interest is excited over some character whose history we follow with the keenest attention. In the majority of cases, the hero has to undergo reverses of fortune, and our sympathy and pity are called into play. Often we find him in a position where a helping hand or one word of explanation would put things to rights, and we have a great desire to be able to assist him. We cannot, therefore, of course, do not; but the feeling has called and we have made no response, and the likelihood is, that when in real life a similar feeling calls, we shall act from the force of habit in a precisely similar way, comforting ourselves with the reflection that it will be all right without our interference,—as it was in the novel or play. Just in the same manner we often feel constrained to help a beggar in the street, our hand goes into our pocket—and stays there, and in time we can pass a beggar without any sentiment of pity, or desire to render assistance. Thus, the only ill effect of the play or novel is that it has upon the heart, which it teaches to be hard and ungenerous.

But however people may represent it to be childish and weak to have feelings, there are times in every man's life when he is made aware that there is something more worth living for than the accumulation of wealth or the attainment of fame. I cannot believe there is any man who has reached, say his fiftieth year, who can assert that he never loved. It may have been an animal, a bird, or a fellow being. At some time or other he experienced a sensation that brightened his life, raised his aims, and ennobled his actions. Love has been a poet's theme from Homer to Swinburne, but never has a purer love been sung than that of the laureate for Arthur Hallam, in whose memory he has given us "In Memoriam," the grandest elegiac poem in the English language. The loves of the sexes is no doubt the

most natural, but when a bond of union exists between man and man, or woman and woman, it is always the most beautiful and disinterested. The severance of such a holy tie as pure love by the cruel hand of death must always be accompanied by sorrow. There has, however, been bestowed upon man a gift that enables him ever to live in the presence of the friend he has lost. The gift of memory is the most marvellous of every faculty. To recall the past is often painful, but we are also enabled to bring bygone happy hours into the present, and we would sooner lose the gift of sight or hearing than that of memory. It is no use idly mourning when any loved one is taken from us. We do not don a specially coloured costume when we lose a favourite cat or dog whom we believe is dead and gone for ever, but when a human being changes his existence on this troubled globe for—we have always been taught to hope—a far happier time in a decidedly more genial climate, we disfigure ourselves in sombre garments, and spoil the nap of our hats for so many days according to the nearness of relationship. Such a custom is a relic of superstition and barbarism, and does not illustrate the faith of our professed religion. There will come a day, I hope, when the funeral ritual will be divested of its mournful mummery, and white robes and flowers will take the place of crape and black neckcloths. That we should sorrow is natural, but for goodness sake don't let us sorrow in a prescribed form, or because it is the proper thing to do. To wet three handkerchiefs in memory of a great aunt or fifth cousin whom we have never seen, is great humbug, and generally requires the aid of a good strong onion—or a legacy. In the latter case it would be a good deal more honest to clap the hands and rejoice, than cry,—only Mrs. Grundy would be shocked. The sincerest sorrow is the sorrow in secret, and the spirit of calm resignation is often that of the chief mourner. What sweet solace do the words bring “ ‘Tis better to have loved and lost, than never to have loved at all,” and they should be the key note of all true mourning. Love never dies, and Memory will always take us into the presence of the one gone before. Let us then be more honest and more manly in our sorrow. Let Mrs. Grundy

shriek if she will. Let her shriek herself to death, we should be well rid of her. Let us keep green and young our affections. Let us hold no false views as to sentiment and feeling. Remember sentiment and sentimentalism are two widely different things. Let not the world, with its avarice and contempt of sacred things, harden our hearts and lessen our capacities for loving and being beloved. Tenderness and generosity have their own rewards, and they are often found in the sweet memory of lost things that those qualities endeared to us. But let us not be led away by conventionality and sham. In loving and in mourning let us be true to ourselves, remembering what the truest of all life's poets has said, "To thine own self be true, and thou canst not then be false to any man."

H. L. N.





OLLA PODRIDA.

MOST likely very few of the visitors to the Paris Exhibition would imagine how the Crown Diamonds (not of the Queen, as some knowing papers reported, but of the old French monarchs), are protected at night. When the hour of shutting up comes the large case in which they are exhibited sinks into the ground, a strong iron door slides over it and is firmly locked by a complicated piece of mechanism. The story of the twelve policemen is a fable.

For what purpose does the Republic still keep these jewels? Would it not be more in accordance with the principles of their government to sell them? Or is there among the heads of the Senate anyone whose imagination is sufficiently wild to allow him to hope that in his day the Empire may be restored and that he may be Emperor? Who knows, France is a queer country, and there is a good deal of Imperialism in a Republic.

The famous Regent, estimated to be worth thirty million francs, is among the jewels. If you hang about the case every day you are sure to hear some one tell its history, and, what is more certain still, is, that you will hear a different story every day.

Who is responsible for the appointment of the jurors at the Paris Exhibition? The following is a fact, and we commend it to all interested. A jury who had to judge the class where engines are exhibited had been wandering about all the morning in search of the exhibits in that class, which,

by a happy thought, are scattered all over the many buildings. At last, one of the party spotted a "puffer." "No, no, no," exclaimed the majority "we have nothing to do with that, that is a *thrashing machine*," and it took nearly half-an-hour to explain to the gentlemen that the construction before them was an engine after all. Very few seemed quite certain, so they copied the remarks of the only one of their number who knew anything about the matter, wiped the perspiration from their brows, and went to luncheon.

We expect to hear next, that a plough will be mistaken for a waggonette, a spade for a clothes brush, and a pot of raspberry jam for a pound of candles.

The jury are working so energetically and getting through their work so quickly, they will be finished about the same time as the eighteen seats (to be) on the Pont de Jena, one of which has taken over three months to put up. We hear one young English exhibitor has set to building a house in the suburbs of Paris and expects to get it finished, furnished, himself happily married, with a son and heir in prospective, by the time the jurors have got through his section.

We sometimes unexpectedly come across a comparatively unknown book, possessing merits within itself that should have guaranteed wider fame. Such an one is the little volume of verse that has been sent to us, entitled "Life's Voyage," by Charles Sanger. It is published by Nisbet, and contains many passages of poetic beauty.

How many aspirations have been addressed to "The Weed." It would take a long list to chronicle all the great thinkers who have been and are great smokers, but what we complain of is that they do not all acknowledge the aid they derive from the fuming, fragrant bowl. When is Tennyson going to give us an ode to Nicotia, or a lyrical monologue in the club smoke-room? We have had many a hymn To Bacchus. To Bacco is a more modern god.

If the laureate wants to produce a great smoke song, he would do well to do it on some of the sun-cured natural leaf tobacco that Messrs. J. F. Allen & Co. are sending from America. Let us commend him to their genuine Perique, the sweetest smoking and the most fragrant tobacco we have ever put into meerschaum. It is almost worth while carrying it in your pouch for the sake of the smell alone. If you can't get it or any of the other tobaccos this firm are importing, write at once to Messrs. Terry & Co., of Great Russell Street Buildings, and find out why.

"Set a thief to catch a thief." The English manufacturers complained to the Customs that the American tobacco and cigarettes were adulterated. The Customs seized and were sold. We suppose the English manufacturers thought the Americans were as bad as themselves.

A gentleman in Shepherds' Bush, in announcing the birth of a daughter, states its name to be Muriel Emily. Fancy having one's children born ready christened. The father's delight would, doubtless, be enhanced could his female children be born ready married.

Surely something should have been accomplished in regard to the Eurydice disaster long before this? Can no one charm us by inventing a plan for the recovery of the wreck, or are we to look in vain for a modern Orpheus? There is this alphabetical difference, however, in the two cases—the ancient Eurydice was in L, the modern is in C.

"Bill Stickers will be prosecuted." But *why* should Mr. William Stickers be prosecuted?

No-bihling (the Doctor of that ilk) will, doubtless, be prosecuted by the German authorities when the weather gets cooler.

They say—who, by-the-way, are the *they* that are always saying these things?—that the ladies of our day are all possessed of the art of talking. But few, we apprehend, are

gifted with the art of reading so well as Miss Fanny Dickens showed herself to be at the Langham Hall the other evening. Her rendering of the old nurse in *Romeo and Juliet* was especially good.

Lunacy is said to be on the increase in Liverpool, and the asylums overcrowded. They evidently have no House of Commons there, in which to confine the surplus.

China is now in need of England's charity. Let us hope that now China's faith is in us, its hopes will not be broken.

There is no doubt about the energy and spirit shown by the management of the Westminster Aquarium. Not only is there a live whale on view in the establishment, but a veritable live mermaid—or the nearest approach to one that can be got. If the mermaid had been a *dead* one, we should have fancied Barnum had had something to do with the matter, for he has a manufactory for defunct mermaids up the Rhine, and the ingredients used are a species of ape found on the West Coast of Africa, and the tail of a fine *salmon*. Fact.





The Ballad of Proud Signelild.

(FROM THE OLD DANISH.)

It is of nights the watchers' night.

(Watch those who will !)

Full many are dancing with main and might,

(On the green isle watches proud Signelild !)

Of her mother proud Signelild asks anon :

“ To the watch-room I would fain begone.”

“ And why, and wherefore, must thou go :

“ Nor brother, nor sister hast there, I trow.”

The maiden has prayed full long and sore,

Till the mother has opened the cottage door.

“ Go, then ! go, then ! O daughter mine ;

“ To the watch-room ne'er went the mother thine : ”

“ There, with his knights, the king will come,

“ Be warned of me : stay here at home.”

“ Comes, too, the queen and maiden train :

“ Mother, speech with her I would gain.”

Straight through the wood the maiden went ;

To the watchers' room her way is bent.

When she has crossed the meadows green,

To rest is gone the royal queen.

When she to castle-gate has won,

The dancing is but now begun.

Now foots it every cavalier ;
The king himself is dancing there.

He gives his hand unto the maid :
“ Come dance, my fair, nor be afraid.”

“ O through the valley I have been,
“ For I would speak with Denmark’s queen.”

“ A little while but dance with me,
“ The queen shall speak thee presently.”

Slim is the maid, and passing fair ;
Now with the king she dances there.

“ Hear, Signelild,” then spake the king,
“ A love-song I would have thee sing.”

“ No love-song have I ever known,
“ Yet will I sing some other one.”

Then sings the maid, and charmeth all ;
The queen has heard it in her hall.

“ Who of my maidens may it be
“ Who sings this nightly melody ?”

“ Who of my maidens is the one
“ Who not to rest with me is gone ?”

Then up and spake a serving wight :
“ No maid of yours sings here to-night.

“ No maid of yours is this, I ween,
“ But Signelild, of the island green !”

“ Reach hither now my scarlet gown,
“ To see the maid I would go down.”

When she to castle-gate has won,
The dancing is right well begun.

Now whirl the couples in the hall :
The queen stands by and watches all.

Then quoth she : " I'll brook I this thing ;
" Signelild dances with the king ! "

Then to her maid : " A flagon here ;
" And fill with sparkling wine, and clear.

" Bring down to me the golden cup,
" And to the edges fill it up."

The king to her his hand gives now :
" Consort, we twain will dance, I trow ! "

" Not seems it that I dance with thee,
" Till Signelild fair has drunk to me."

She hands the cup, the maiden drinks ;
A chill corse on the threshold sinks.

Awe-struck, the king has seen the sight,
As lies the maiden stark and white.

" O ne'er was fairer found, I wis,
" Who, guileless, met with death like this ! "

For her the women all must mourn,
As to the church her corse is borne.

Had mother's voice a warning been,
(Watch those who will !)
A better fate were hers, I ween.
(On the green isle watches proud Signelild.)

St. James's Magazine.

AUGUST, 1878.

MARTINDALE'S MONEY.

A NOVEL.

By the Author of "Old as the Hills," "Kate Savage," &c., &c.

CHAPTER XIV.

A CHRISTMAS OFFERING.



SUMMER and autumn had passed. Winter held the earth—or the tiny part of it which constitutes our English world—in its hard, cold grasp: a winter of an exceptional rather than of an usual character; not the familiar sloppy season, combining the mildness of May with the misery of December, but a real hard time of snowstorms, bitter winds, and frost. It was next to impossible, in such a condition of things, to believe that this tight little island had ever known the smiling days of summer, the golden days which the poets praise, but which are so trying to average humanity. Now, the state of things was equally trying, but in quite another way. It is difficult to be cheerful when one's nose is blue and one's feet are like icicles; nevertheless, most people seemed disposed to make the best of it, and to comfort themselves with the assertion that it was real Christmas weather. There was a good deal of make-believe required in order to render this view acceptable; but then make-believe seems from time immemorial to have been associated with the Christian feast. The tradespeople insist upon persuading us that we are all happy and jolly; they

convince us, through the medium of their advertisements, that Christmas is nothing if not merry. Let us, therefore, eat and drink more than is good for us ; let us protest that we won't go home until morning ; let us shake hands all round and vow eternal friendship ; let us pay unwilling tribute to the postman, the milkman, the butcher boy, and all the rest of them, only comforting ourselves with the reflection that Christmas comes but *once* a year. It made very little difference to Doctor Singleton's household ; it certainly brought no merrymaking, for the Doctor was out of health and peevish, and there were reasons why Grace (who had not yet sought another home) should not be in the highest of spirits.

Her book had made its appearance in the orthodox three volumes, and whatever might be its literary merits, it certainly was not, in a pecuniary sense, a success. It so happened that it came in for a considerable share of criticism at the hands of the gentlemen who "do" the light literature reviews for the newspapers and weekly journals. The diversity of the verdicts pronounced by these infallible judges was perfectly amazing. By one paper the book was "damned with faint praise" as a fairly-well written novel ; a second asserted that it was singularly devoid of humour ; a third informed its readers that the story was full of witty and humourous touches ; a fourth considered that there was no lack of pathos ; a fifth decided that it was written in good English ; whilst a sixth declared that its grammar was "curious," and expressed a hope that in writing for English readers the authoress "would consider their old-fashioned prejudices in favour of their mother tongue." Others dismissed the volumes curtly with a sentence or two, and one paper which was gasping for existence at the time, and which shortly afterwards perished from amongst journals, devoted a column and a half of smartly-written padding to the misrepresentation of the whole story. Praises poured forth at such length would have been indeed insipid. Who would read a column and a half of commendation ? So, in the hope of pleasing a censorious public, this ill-fated journal fell upon poor Grace's

novel, and, metaphorically speaking, cut it up into the very smallest pieces. The authoress was a little bewildered by all this at first. Praised by some, blamed by others, she should have made haste to laugh at everything, for fear of being obliged to weep. This she did not do, however, for it takes a long time to become a philosopher.

She took it for granted that, as she had failed in love in the first place, so she had failed in literature in the second. To persevere in writing was out of the question. She found that, instead of being paid, she was expected to pay for the privilege of circulating her ideas in print. Publishers manifested no eagerness to pour sovereigns into her lap. It seemed clear, therefore, that some other pursuit would have to be selected. With the new year she would have to make a fresh beginning, unless she were content to live on yet longer with Dr. Singleton.

In the meantime she nursed the Doctor, and Christmas came round. The bells were ringing as she left the house to go to church on Christmas morning. Now and again a flake of snow came drifting down upon her jacket telling of more storms to come, but she had not been out of the house for days until now, and she felt that whatever the weather might be it would do her good to face it.

The cold air brought an unwonted colour to her cheeks and a sparkle to her dark eyes which one of the congregation was not slow to notice. This person stood erect in the square and softly-cushioned pew in which the Hawleyes worshipped, screened by red curtains from the gaze of sinners in a humbler rank of life.

The service had just commenced when Grace entered, and the occupants of the pew in question were standing, and therefore partly visible. The Colonel was there, clad in a fur-bound coat. By his side was Julia, holding an infinitesimal prayer-book between daintily-gloved fingers. Hers was one of those fair complexions which winter weather does not improve, and perhaps it was owing to her knowledge of this fact that she allowed her veil to remain down and conceal her features from her lover, who stood opposite. In another corner was Jim Travers, and

it was he who noticed Grace as she entered the church. Jim was already vastly altered. London life and London example had wrought a change alike in looks, dress, and bearing. There was nothing of the hobbledehoy about him now. His whiskers had developed ; his clothes fitted him as if they had been made for him instead of for somebody else; he looked as if he were not ashamed of himself. He had gone forward not by steps but by strides, not by strides but by leaps and bounds.

Peace and goodwill were the keynotes throughout the service ; good tidings and great joy went hand in hand through hymns and prayers and sermon. The village choir sang lustily and with a good courage. The Colonel with a very large prayer book and most solemn mien repeated the responses in sonorous tones. Julia thoroughly entered into the singing, and no doubt each of them realised what it was all about. Whether they did or did not the service came to an end, as all things must, and the congregation trooped out into the winter air. Grace, with the last hymn tune repeating itself in her ears, hurried out amongst the first. Few went her way, and bent on nothing but on getting home she did not stop to look behind her. Presently, however, she became aware that some one was following her with rapid strides.

"Won't you stop and speak to me ?" said a voice with the tones of which she was familiar.

She slackened her pace, and Jim Travers reached her side.

"Thank you for keeping your promise ; " he said. "I had your letter—if indeed it could be called a letter."

"Was there anything unusual about it ?"

"Not at all; it was most ordinary. But I have no right to complain. Why did you hurry away from church. I want you to wish me a merry Christmas and a happy new year."

"I do so with all my heart."

"Really, with all your heart ?"

"What do you mean ?" she asked, with a heightened colour.

"Mean! I don't know what I mean, except that I am glad beyond words to see you again, and that I want you to be a little glad to see me."

"I am as glad," she replied, "as I am likely to be about anything."

"Do you know why I have come down here again?"

"To see your friends, I presume, and to be present at your cousin's wedding."

"The wedding is to be postponed for a month or two," he answered. "Haven't you heard that *your* cousin, the bridegroom elect, is going to try to get into Parliament as member for Hexbury? The wedding is not to come off until after the general election."

"I had not heard anything about it."

"Neither event interests me very much," said Jim. "I only came down here to see one particular person."

"Yes?"

"Why don't you ask whom I mean?"

"I have no right to be curious."

"Or no wish?"

"No wish, if you prefer it."

"I do not prefer it. You remember what I said when last I saw you. You remember that walk over the heath. I dare say it was nothing to you, but it was everything to me. I have thought of it and dreamed of it, and of your words and looks again and again. What I wanted to make you understand then was that I cared for you more than for anybody else in the world. Anybody else! Why there is nobody for whom I care or who cares for me. I wouldn't tell you in words because I was afraid to spoil my chance. I knew, of course, that you wouldn't listen to me then, and—and I half feared you were fond of somebody else. What I meant to do was to make sure that I should not lose sight of you, and then to go away and make myself more worthy of you. I dare say I ought to have waited longer—or else that I have waited too long already. I cannot help it. You are all the world to me, and I have come to tell you so. Will you try and like me; will you say that I may try and make you like me?"

Grace heard him to the end. She was obliged to do so. There was that in the young fellow's tones and gestures which demanded and enforced attention.

Was it not a worthy Christmas-box, this offering of a manly honest love? What better gift could a man offer to a woman on such a day? But could the woman accept it? Grace doubted whether she could or not; her heart was troubled, and, after the manner of her kind, she temporized.

"You have taken me by surprise," she said, with downcast eyes.

"Does it surprise you?" he asked rather sadly. "Did not you ever guess that I was likely to say what I have now said?"

"I may have thought so once; but I looked upon you as a boy, and it is the privilege of boys to change their minds."

"Do I seem much like a boy to-day?"

"No," she answered, candidly.

Then, after a pause, he said,

"You have not answered me."

"Must I do so now?"

"If your answer is to be 'yes,' please give it now; if it is 'no,' put it off—and never say it at all."

There was a pleading tremble in his voice as he said these last words, which touched the girl to the heart. Almost to her own surprise she had met him with cold calm answers hitherto. Now she replied in quite a humble low-toned voice, "I like you, and I thank you, but I cannot say 'yes' to-day. Give me time. Wait a few weeks; wait until February."

He bowed his head.

"Shall I write to you then?"

"No, do not write; I will come for my answer."

She smiled, as if divining his reason for this preference, and he smiled too. Then, as if by consent, they halted beside the high hedge which ended a little farther on at Dr. Singleton's gate.

"Good-bye," he said, "until February. We will not say

anything about a merry Christmas, but I wish you, and you may wish me, a happy new year."

"I wish you many happy years," Grace said.

"It all depends upon you," was the answer, and then he gently kissed her hand and left her.



CHAPTER XV.

YOUR VOTE AND INTEREST.

THE political world was in a state of high excitement, and the newspapers fanned the flame. Hexbury, which in the general way was one of the sleepiest of cities, roused itself for the occasion to a sense of its high calling and its principles. The Government had been obliged to go to the country, and from North to South and from East to West the country showed that it meant to have a change. The Liberal organs were rabid and despondent by turns, whilst the Conservative journals blew their trumpets loud and long as day by day the results of the latest election contests became known to the world. Each party in Hexbury had its newspaper. The *Gazette* (which was yellow) after declaring that it would be both idle and unprofitable to inquire how this surprising change had been caused, nevertheless cast about for a satisfactory reason for the alienation of the constituencies; it asked pathetically whether it were due to the indifference of the Nonconformists, to a friendly alliance between the old Whigs and the new Constitutionalists, to the united influence of Bible and Beer as represented by Parson and Publican, or to a combination and mixture of all those elements. Finally, the *Gazette* admitted that, whatever the causes might be, it was clear that the majority of the late Government had been utterly extinguished. On the other hand, the local *Telegraph* (which

was blue) gloried in the party triumph ; it expressed its belief that it was due to the mutual confidence which had sprung up between Capital and Labour, and considered that the elections demonstrated beyond doubt the real existence of the Conservative working man, who was prepared to uphold the grand old principles and the venerable institutions of his country. Early in the course of the general battle George Martindale received a communication from a few of the leaders of the Constitutional party in Hexbury, and the result of his answer was that a deputation was to wait upon him, in order more particularly to ascertain his views and his qualifications as the possible representative of the constituency in the House of Commons in the place of Mr. Peckham, with whose services a large number of the electors desired to dispense.

In the gloom of an afternoon early in January the deputation appeared at Blatherwick Park.

The butler ushered the worthy gentlemen into the dining room, where Martindale stood upon the hearthrug ready to receive them. The appearance of the room was very different now from that which it had been on the day of Matthew Martindale's funeral just about a twelvemonth before. The shabby carpet, stiff-backed chairs and faded curtains had all disappeared, their places being filled by new and costly substitutes. Indeed there was a degree of richness and splendour about the apartment, illuminated as it was by a huge and roaring fire, which appeared to awe some of the members of the deputation very considerably. One gentleman, albeit he was a town councillor, was so impressed and was so considerate that he stealthily spread his handkerchief upon a chair before venturing to sit down.

Alderman Chadwick, who introduced the deputation, was, however, quite equal to the occasion. He was a little man with a large supply of words which he poured forth with even more satisfaction to himself than they afforded to his hearers, who, however, entirely believed in him.

When the Alderman had finished his introductory remarks, other gentlemen expressed their sentiments and interrogated Martindale upon all sorts of subjects of the men-

tion of which he had fortunately received due notice. Then wine was handed round and partaken of freely and with relish. The deputation became disposed not to expect too much; its members were inclined to look favourably upon a candidate who treated them well; the extensiveness and richness of the establishment still impressed them; even the attentions of the butler were not without their influence, and one of the humbler members involuntarily addressed this worthy as "Sir," when he offered to replenish his glass. Then when the faces of his visitors shone in the firelight—partly from the cold without and partly from the warmth within, Martindale made a reply, the heads of which he had carefully prepared beforehand. Approval was manifested. "Hear, hear," was repeated again and again, and the speaker concluded amid general satisfaction. They had not come to be censorious; it had not been intended to be exacting, although, of course, the usual mode of proceeding had to be followed. They wanted a candidate—a gentleman who lived in the neighbourhood and who would be able to do some good for the town, and perhaps the Liberal journal uttered a grain of truth in a disagreeable way when it said that Mr. Martindale was to be the member for Blatherwick Park rather than for the City of Hexbury.

Whatever the motives might be it came to this, that Martindale was invited to "stand" for Hexbury in the Conservative interest, and that he accepted the invitation. There was a good deal of handshaking when the deputation departed; pledges of support were lavishly given, and confident anticipations of triumph expressed.

"Above all," said Alderman Chadwick, extending his hands with a mixture of entreaty and command, "above all, gentlemen, let there be 'armony in the camp.'" Harmony was a favourite word with the Alderman, and very few of his hearers considered that it lost value or melody though the speaker discarded its initial letter.

A few days later George Martindale was in London. Whilst he was waiting at the railway station for his home-ward train, late in the afternoon, he noticed a gentleman who was sitting upon one of the benches. There was that

about the gentleman's appearance which indicated hard times ; he wore his hat jauntily, but it was shabby; he crossed his legs and looked admiringly at his small feet, but even by the flickering lamplight it was noticeable that it was high time his shoes were replaced by a new pair. Presently this person got up and sauntered along the platform. Then George immediately recognised his walk, and knew the gentleman to be Major Munns. It is doubtful whether he would have thought it worth while to salute the Major; but that worthy settled the matter by discovering his presence, and greeting him with effusion.

"My dear Martindale," said he, "glad to meet you. An age since I have seen you. You have forgotten us since you became a landed proprietor."

Martindale murmured a disclaimer.

"My dear sir, my joke, only my joke," cried the Major; "of course you have other things to think of than poor relations, or connections shall we say? I confess to you," he added in a lower tone, "that I am infernally out at elbows."

Martindale endeavoured to change the topic by enquiring after his aunt. Major Munns shook his head as if the good lady's health were a source of deep anxiety to him.

"Not at all well—not at all well," he said, repeating the expression according to a habit he had acquired. "London does not agree with her. We are staying a little way out of town for a change, but the air is pretty much the same."

"But why not take her farther away?"

"My dear fellow, I cannot afford it; travelling costs money, and that is exactly what I have not got. In fact if you were to offer me the loan of a five-pound note for a week or two, or say until quarter-day, I should not have the courage to refuse it."

What could Martindale do in answer to so delicately framed an appeal, save take out his pocket book and produce the suggested amount? He did so, and the Major pressed his hand warmly.

"You may rely upon my sending you the amount by quarter day," he said. "Now, is there anything I can do

for you in town? Drop me a line whenever you want anything attended to, and I will carry out your commands."

"Thanks," said Martindale; "but I shall soon have to live in London for the greater part of the year, that is, if I manage to get to the top of the poll down at Hexbury."

"What?" cried Major Munns. "You are going in for a seat in the House! My dear sir, you are quite right. A man in your position ought to be in Parliament."

"Not a doubt about it," said George rather dryly; perhaps he thought he had a right to be dry, after advancing that five-pound note.

The Major saw that he had been too effusive, and moderated his tone.

"I was thinking," said he, "whether I could be of any service to you. I have helped a good many men in that kind of thing—talked to their meetings, you know; supported them on the platforms, and said a word or two now and then to fill up the gaps."

Martindale puffed at his cigar, and considered. The fact was he rather needed the assistance of some friend, who, as the Major expressed it, could fill up the gaps. It would be highly desirable to have some one who would lend a hand at the canvassing, support a resolution at a meeting, and talk to the members of his committee. He had already felt the want of such assistance, but he had not made a sufficient number of friends, either at Hexbury or elsewhere, to enable him to select a person fit to perform the small offices required of him. Mr. Croft was too old to do more than the routine work of the contest. Colonel Hawkley could not put two words together when on a platform. Sir Marcus would have done very well, but then he had his own constituents to look after just now, and moreover he had recently lost his wife. The question was whether Major Munns would answer the purpose.

George was disposed to try him.

"Would you be inclined to come down and help me at Hexbury?" he asked, after a pause.

"My dear sir, of course I *am* inclined," was the response.

"Very well; when can you come?"

"Ah," said the other, "that is a little awkward. You see there is your aunt to be considered."

George hesitated a moment. He certainly had not been very civil to poor Mrs. Munns since his promotion to riches. Why not let her come with her husband for two or three weeks? If ever she were to do so now was the time, for he did not anticipate that his future wife would hereafter desire to entertain these family connections. Perhaps, too, it might be well to have a lady in the house during this period of necessary civilities to all sorts of people. Moreover, she had been kind to him and fond of him in her way in days when he had visited at the Pimlico lodgings.

"Why not bring my aunt? I shall be pleased to see her for a week or two, if she can put up with the country at this time of year," he said.

The Major expressed his belief that Mrs. Munns would be delighted to come, if she could arrange to do so. The fact was, that he had in his mind certain obstacles which might arise upon any proposed removal of himself and his wife and their belongings from their present lodgings, that is to say, until certain conditions precedent in the shape of payment of arrears of rent had been overcome. However, it would not be the first time that he had contended, or left his wife to contend, with such little difficulties.

At any rate it was understood that he individually should come to Blatherwick Park as soon as possible, and this having been agreed upon, Martindale had to get into his train.

Major Munns saw him off, and then went and dined sumptuously, so sumptuously that a considerable reduction was made in the change of the five-pound note. Then he improved his wardrobe and went home by a late train to convey the invitation to his wife.

On the day next but one both Major and Mrs. Munns arrived at Blatherwick Park with rather scanty luggage.

Mrs. Munns was so accustomed to domestic inconveniences and pecuniary stumbling blocks that she was at first quite overpowered by the air of freedom, luxury and abundance which pervaded George Martindale's establishment.

Her husband, who thoroughly appreciated their temporary quarters, deemed it expedient in the first place not to surrender himself entirely to the enjoyment of the personal comforts which surrounded him. In the mornings he drove into Hexbury with George, went to the Committee Rooms, did a little canvassing in a casual sort of way, stood about at the hotel entrances, and otherwise showed himself as a friend and supporter of the Conservative candidate.

Mr. Peckham was evidently displeased at the idea of being turned out of the seat which he had filled with satisfaction to himself for a great many years, and he and his friends were bent upon making a hard fight for it. It was agreed all round that neither party could afford to leave a stone unturned, and so they went to work with addresses, meetings, squibs, and all the rest of the old and well-worn machinery.

(*To be continued.*)



FROM EAST TO WEST.

FIRST MORNING.



BITTER wind rose up before the sun,
Shaking the wearied alders by the river,
Making the purple hyacinths pale and shiver,
And all the glory of the skies undone ;
Wild storms are raging on the stern, far sea,
And never shall my love come back to me.

SECOND MORNING.

Across the stretch of meadow-land and sea
The sweet west wind blew lovingly at dawning,
A golden glory flooded all the lea,
The roses welcomed butterfly and bee,
The skylark sang his brightest song this morning,
And at the noon my love came back to me.

W. J. MORGAN.



OUR MODERN POETS.

NO. XIV.—THE NEW WRITER.

IN a fervent and graceful tribute to Henry Vaughan the Silurist, the author of "Songs of Two Worlds" thus sets forth his views of poetic excellence:—

"Thou art so high and yet unknown; shall I
Repine that I too am obscure?
Nay, what care I, though all my verse shall die,
If only it is pure?"

There is a twofold appropriateness in such an address from the later to the earlier poet—the same district is the birth-place of both, and there are striking affinities between them in range of thought and poetic style. Vaughan's chief work was the "Silex Scintillans," a collection of reflective, and on the whole religious, poems, the title being intended to express that the various pieces represent sparks from the author's heart. They are, in fact, songs of two worlds—songs of the human and the divine—just as much as the collection so entitled by Vaughan's nineteenth century successor and admirer. Both of the poets are meditative and didactic, Vaughan perhaps inclining to the question of appeal, and the author of "Songs of Two Worlds" dwelling more in suggestive reflection. The respective circumstances of the poets regulate so far their temper and prevalent tone; yet their anxieties and emotions are stirred by similar influences, the quality of sentiment is alike delicate and pathetic in both, and their conclusions as to life and its duties are almost identical. Both are strong advocates of that common

sense which involves a man's respect for himself and his privileges; both see with keen and sympathetic insight that, with all its superficial jars and incongruities, human life is a beautiful and a sacred thing; and both are anxious that it should be properly respected and ennobled. Hence comes Vaughan's sturdy and beautiful poem, "Rules and Lessons," in which he details with practical skill and poetic nicety—sometimes, indeed, with quaint and almost amusing suggestiveness—the various principles of conduct a man should observe in order to show himself worthy of his high origin. There is in "Songs of Two Worlds" much that partakes of the condensed pith and practical wisdom of the following stanza from "Rules and Lessons," but there is hardly anything quite so robust and direct :—

" Seek not the same steps with the crowd ; stick thou
 To thy sure trot ; a constant, humble mind
 Is both his own joy and his Maker's too ;
 Let folly dust it on or lag behind.
 A sweet self-privacy in a right soul
 Outranks the earth, and lines the utmost pole."



"The True Man" in "Songs of Two Worlds" is found to be possessed of the same high qualities of discrimination and self-respect; he too is to dwell far from the madding crowd and to "study sooth-fastnesse," nor to be jealous of the successes of the Philistines; and yet he must stand aloof more in sorrow than in contempt, his adviser hesitating to give such short shrift to popular vanity as Vaughan's advice implies. It is in this tenderness for those that differ—for those that are wilful and hostile as well as for those that fall short from weak heart and feeble knees—that one recognises a distinct feature in the philosophy of "Songs of Two Worlds." The New Writer is powerful in his pathos; he understands that attitude of *lowliness* for which the Greeks had no word, but which constitutes one of the most distinctive graces of the Christian soldier. Hence it is that in his "True Man" he is not a little troubled about inequalities of lot that Henry Vaughan would have seen small cause to consider at any length. These injected questions interrupt the flow of his "Rules and Lessons":—

“ What claim hast thou to joy, while others moan ?
God made us all, and art thou more than these ? ”

Yet the leading precepts are distinct and firm, and the likeness to Vaughan in outline and aim, if not in illustration and detail, is at once apparent :—

“ Take thou no care for aught save truth and right ;
Content, if such thy fate, to die obscure ;
Wealth palls and honours, Fame may not endure,
And loftier souls soon weary of delight ;
Keep innocence ; be all a true man ought ;
Let neither pleasure tempt nor pains appal ;
Who hath this, he hath all things, having nought ;
Who hath it not, hath nothing, having all.”

In his admiration of Vaughan, then, there is a distinct indication of the poet's own literary sympathies and artistic preference. He feels it his duty to part from the crowd, yet he has a lingering affection for those that are of it, and he returns from time to time to observe and sympathise. He will not descend with prophetic mien from his heights to appeal and denounce, but he will watch for a weary form, a sad, troubled face, a repentant expression, and he will allow the effect to enter into his spirit and sway his mood. Where sympathy is impossible he makes no attempt to give any, as in the little lyric on “ Courage,” where he contrasts the man of steadfast independence of spirit with those

“ Who, bending supple knees,
Live for no end, except to please,”

whereas it is the duty of those whose higher aims and aspirations put them in possession of at least some measure of the truth to let their light shine before men, and in all circumstances to have the courage that comes with consciousness of right :—

“ Stand upright, speak thy thought, declare
The truth thou hast, that all may share ;
Be bold, proclaim it everywhere ;
They only live who dare.”

But let it be noticed that, even in such an extreme case as this, though the poet himself has nothing in common with

those of the supple knees, he does not part from them without indicating that they too might have had sympathy, but for their steady perversity and love of darkness rather than light. They have been their own worst counsellors; it is no fault of the righteous and the brave that they are not with them. There is a subtle vein of tender regret over wasted energies and lost opportunities in the manner of this leave-taking :—

“ They have their due reward ; they bend
Their lives to an unworthy end—
On empty aims the toil expend
Which had secured a friend.”

It is, then, a leading feature of these songs to render everywhere what is due—not to be sparing of condemnation where there is need for it, but above all to beware of passing on the other side if there is sorrow to soothe or pain to alleviate. Contrasts are set off with a nicety of touch that is at once sharp and delicate. The intention is not to wound, but to pour in balm. What a depth of tenderness, for instance, in “The Enigma,” in which the theme is the sad lot of a girl gradually lured from her bright home, away in the country, on to that stony-hearted stepmother, the London street! What a far cry it seems from the idyllic sweetness of the red fallow on the hill, the green copses, the cuckoo’s song, the reapers, and the buoyant laughter of children, to the sordid street, the theatre door, the pitiful story, and the Moloch sacrifice!

“ But here, as she passes along,
Is one whose young cheek still shows,
'Mid the pallid, pitiful throng,
The fresh bloom of a tender rose.”

It is the very subtlety and suddenness of influence, the very unwariness of one fatal footstep, the very closeness of wrong to right, that moves the true man of feeling, and calls forth his sympathy and his tears, his regret and his blessing, under circumstances that would suggest to the man of the world only loathing and imprecation. Thus we

find this summary settling of the enigma by way of conclusion :—

“ Heaven pity you ! So little turns
The stream of our lives from the right ;
So like is the flame that burns
To the hearth that gives warmth and light ;
So fine the impassable fence,
Set for ever 'twixt right and wrong ;
Between white lives of innocence
And dark lives too dreadful for song.”

In “ The Organ Boy ” there is an example of the sympathetic quality of the poet’s mind of a most graphic and interesting kind. It is pitched on the same key as Wordsworth’s charming “ Power of Music ;” but while the one is a simple, tender melody, the other is more in the nature of a laboured theme. In the “ Power of Music ” there is all the sweetness and the tenderness of the lonely lute, while the “ Organ Boy ” comes with sudden and powerful harmonies of concerted instruments. Wordsworth’s phraseology, as usual, is subtle both in expression and suggestion, and the flood-gates of emotion are filled to the bursting by that one inimitable touch with which he sets forth the musician—

“ I am glad for him, blind as he is ! ”

In the “ Organ Boy ,” on the other hand, the descriptive strokes are more decided and more elaborate, and appreciation and sympathy are challenged for him at large. Wordsworth’s Orpheus gets his prominence because he “ works on the crowd ;” the young musician in “ Songs of Two Worlds ” sways his audience because of his interesting individuality. He is the outcome of old Rome, and as such the poet’s heart warms to him at first sight. He is a relic of departed greatness, an individual at once interesting in himself and forming a link in the march of circumstance. It is not in the spirit that dictated the famous and quite justifiable “ Approach, thou craven, crouching slave,” the poet addresses the child musician. He is delighted with him above all for what he is, and for what he suggests and what he accomplishes besides. What he is is set forth with loving, realistic

touch, so that most readers will have no difficulty in recognising him :—

“ Great brown eyes,
Thick plumes of hair,
Old corduroys
The worse for wear ;
A buttoned jacket,
And, peeping out,
An ape’s grave poll
Or a guinea-pig’s snout.
A sun-kissed face,
And a dimpled mouth,
With the white flashing teeth
And soft smile of the south.

* * * *

But a commonplace picture
To commonplace eyes,
Yet full of a charm
Which the thinker will prize.”

What he suggests is finely expressed in a tribute and a criticism, the old Romans being warmly praised in so far as they were true and brave, and blamed for their foolish and fatal excesses. Here, as before, the theme is tinged with regret for what might have been, and with apprehension as the reflection forces itself forward that “the thing which hath been it is that which shall be.”

“ I turn with grave thought
To this child of the ages,
And to all that is writ
In Time’s hidden pages.
Shall young Howards or Guelphs,
In the days that shall come,
Wander forth seeking bread
Far from England and home ? ”

What the boy accomplishes is not the least attractive feature in the poem, both for itself and for the interest in it that takes rise from Wordsworth’s “Power of Music.” Wordsworth’s is better because of its variety and its wonderful phraseology, but nothing could be more tender and

faithful, quicker with impulse and genial emotion, than this :—

“ See the poor children swarm
 From dark court and dull street,
 As the gay music quickens
 The lightsome young feet.
 See them now whirl away,
 Now insidiously come,
 With a coy grace which conquers
 The squalor of home.
 See the pallid cheeks flushing
 With innocent pleasure
 At the hurry and haste
 Of the quick-footed measure.
 See the dull eyes now bright,
 And now happily dim,
 For some soft-dying cadence
 Of love-song or hymn.
 Dear souls, little joy
 Of their young lives have they,
 So thro' hymn-tune and song-tune
 Play on, my child, play.”

Enough has been said to show that the author's philosophical bent is decided and consistent; probably, indeed, there is in it a uniform placidity and a somewhat sombre hue, sufficient to indicate a certain narrowness, or at least speciality, of grasp and treatment. We are too closely held, perhaps, up to the solemnities and pathos of life, apart from those cheerful sunny influences that really make large part of the truly happy existence. A man may be in earnest and yet have it in him to enjoy himself heartily; to laugh, for example, even as Herr Tenfelsdrockh, without losing his self-respect, his philosophical dignity, or his sympathetic tenderness. When Charles Lamb felt tempted to utter witticisms at funerals it was not that he was giddy and destitute of emotional fervour more than other men, but that his extraordinary acuteness of sensitive feeling rebounded from the severe tension of the circumstances and induced the opposite extreme as a relief. A perusal of even the titles of many of the “ Songs of Two Worlds ” will be

enough to show the poet's tendency. At no great distance from one another there occur poems on such subjects as these :—"To the Setting Sun," "When I am Dead," "Love's Suicide," "Drowned," "The Weary River," "Other Days," "Fetters," "Love in Death," "Doubt," "Nemesis," "At an Almshouse," "A Hymn in Time of Idols," "Children of the Street," and so on. It is only fair to say, however, that the majority of these were treated of in the earliest of the three series that form the volume, while the second series has four poems called "Songs," and the third has six with the same title, as against none so marked in the first. Of course, a steady continuous perusal of so many separate studies, with sombre basis and pathetic sentiment, will induce, in a healthy mind, a rebound similar to Charles Lamb's under extraordinary pressure. Thus it is well that the shadows are set off now and then against sunshine, in the late parts of the volume, and that both themes and treatment relieve to some extent the favorite pathetic mood. In telling the story of "Gilbert Beckett and the Fair Saracen," the poet is tender and graceful and attractive, but the sadder note prevails through the prejudice of the standpoint from which the case is viewed. It is a good narrative poem—one of the best of the present generation—but there is a wilfulness in the handling of the romance, altogether peculiar to the poet's idiosyncrasy. He cannot separate the famous archbishop and his fate from the legendary episode in the history of his parents. The reader recoils from the vision of the murdered prelate, while he is thinking of the maid and her recovered Gilbert. Yet the author's visual sweep reaches so far, both before and after, that he cannot help thinking of the powerful and unfortunate son, just as he brings together the romantic young couple.

" Peace! Love is Lord of all. But I,
 Seeing her fierce son's mitred tomb,
Conjoin with fancy's dreaming eye
 This love-tale and that dreadful doom.
Sped hither by a hidden will,
 O'er sea and land I watch her go;
'Gilbert,' I hear her murmur still,
 And 'London' still she whispers low."

Immediately after this poem, however, comes a sweet lyric, tinged of course with the reflective pathos that is the leading characteristic of all the poems, yet presenting on the whole a grave cheerfulness of mood that is gently pleasing like the light *susurrus* of a summer night. It reminds one of Gray's "Eton College" in particular and of his sentimental tenderness in general. It is an address "To a Child of Fancy," having in it a lively appreciation of childhood's ways, an apprehension of what may be, a hope and a firm faith. There is a brightness, too, in the song to the unrealized fair ideal, and a concluding breadth and force that please all the more for the contrasted qualities that distinguish them.

"I wait, I watch, I hunger, though I know
 Thou wilt not come at all who stay'st so long.
 My hope has lost its strength, my heart its glow;
 I grow too cold for song:
 Long since I might have sung, hadst thou come then,
 A song to echo through the souls of men.
 "Yet, since 'tis better far to dream in sleep,
 Than wholly lose the treacheries of time,
 I hold it gain to have seen thy garments sweep
 On the far hills sublime:
 Still will I hope Thy glorious face to see,—
 Beam on me, fair Ideal, beam on me!"

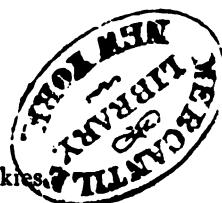
A subsequent song concludes with the decided admiration of "a soul self-contained and a proud innocent heart," a position which is gained only after rejection of both melancholy and jovial folly. This leads round naturally to the author's strong normal attitude—the consideration of life and its interests from a groundwork resting in *penseroso*. Indeed, it is but just to say, in case of misapprehension, that every one of these poems is, in and for itself, not only possible but defensible, and mayhap beautiful as well; nor does that admission affect the criticism which postulates *L'Allegro* to balance *Il Penseroso*. One of the best poems in the collection is also that which makes the best approach to the careful balancing of light and shade, which gives free utterance to the hope that lights up the gloom, notwithstanding varieties of sinister influence. The "Ode on a

"Fair Spring Morning" is a magnificent hymn of thanksgiving, praise, and trust ; it is bright with the enjoyment of renewed vitality and energies, and aglow with the prospects of a higher life.

" For still the world is young, for still the spring
Renews itself, and still the lengthening hours
Bring back the month of flowers :
The leaves are green to-day as those of old,
For Chaucer and for Shakespeare ; still the gold
Of August gilds the rippling breadths of wheat ;
Young maids are fair and sweet
As when they frolicked gay, with flashing feet,
Round the old May-pole. All young things rejoice."

Yet it is not unalloyed pleasure that can come to the poet, or any thinking man, in a calm survey of the present bustle, strife, and waywardness. There is the charge from flippant outsiders that the world is getting old—that, indeed, irritates as a groundless assertion, while it gives scope for the poet's sturdy argument and fine illustration. But there are headstrong members of the human family who wilfully look away from the true source of inspiration and comfort, and there are our own perverse wills and downward desires.

" We only, we alone,
Let jarring discords mar our song,
And find our music take a lower tone.
We only, with dim eyes
And laboured vision feebly strain,
And flout the undying splendours of the skies.



The truth of this is the pity of it, and yet surely life in these latter days is not altogether that of selfish Philistines. In any case it is possible to carry the feeling about with one too much, just as it is possible to let the world dominate the spirit too exclusively. Thus the leading feature of this noble ode is the assertion of man's ultimate resurrection to a state of existence better suited to his power and capabilities than the present. Incidentally, however, there is warm appreciation of the sights and sounds of nature, which indicates at least the possibility of grasping what a man like Wordsworth meant by that sweet abandonment to external

influences which made the present life so full of real enjoyment and spiritual edification. It seems possible, by very distance of outlook, to be unfair to the beauties that are at hand. As a specimen of descriptive handiwork and skilful melodious expression, as well as of a degree of spiritual insight, the following may be taken :—

“ Oh, see how glorious show,
 On this fair morn in May, the clear-cut hills,
 The dewy lawns, the hawthorns white,
 Argent on plains of gold, the growing light
 Pure as when first on the young earth
 The faint warm sunlight came to birth.
 There is a nameless air
 Of sweet renewal over all which fills
 The earth and sky with life, and everywhere,
 Before the scarce seen sun begins to glow,
 The birds awake which slumbered all night long,
 And with a gush of song,
 First doubting of the strain, then full and wide
 Raise their fresh hymns thro' all the country side.”

There is one other ode in the selection, “An Ode to Free Rome,” which is eloquent, melodious, and stately, and charged with regret for the lost opportunities and the mad follies of history, and with sympathy for all that is honourable and heroic and true. The comparison of the past of Rome and the present of Britain is manly and of captivating sympathy. Rome may regain her glories, but she can hardly ever get back the power she once had :—

“ That to the colder North has flown,
 To where she hath—she,
 The little island under grayer light,
 'Mid loud perpetual surges of the sea,
 By boisterous winds o'erblown,
 Seated upon two hemispheres, and can teach,
 As thou couldst once, a universal speech.”

In “The Wanderer,” and “The Evensong,” there is an embodiment of deep, sharp experience, and consequent confession of faith. The former is a clear unravelling and statement of the intricacies and various stages of mental

and spiritual development, culminating in the conviction that faith is greater than knowledge, and that there is infinite beauty in the mystery of godliness. The allegory of the poem is sustained with freedom and dignity, while the implied realism is penetrating and forcible. In "The Evensong," we find the poet again on Gray's ground, this time in a position not unlike that which inspired the immortal elegy :—

" The hymns and the prayers were done, and the village church
was still,

As I lay in a waking dream in the churchyard upon the hill.

The graves were all around, and the dark yews over my head,
And below me the winding stream and the exquisite valley were
spread.

The sun was sloping down with a glory of dying rays,
And the hills were bathed in gold, and the woods were vocal
with praise :

But from the deep-set valley there rose a vapour of grey,
And the sweet day sank, and the glory waxed fainter and faded
away.

Then there came, like a chilling wind, a cold, low whisper of
doubt,
Which silenced the echoes of hymns, and blotted the glories out.
And I wrestled with powers unseen, and strove with a Teacher
Divine,
Like Jacob, who strove with the angel, and found with the dawn
a sign."

The wrestling gives shape to some very fine didactic poetry, at once nimble in melody and compact and clear in thought. The poet grapples with the difficulties of the age, thereby fulfilling to good purpose the promise he makes in his "apology" at an earlier stage. The wide gulf that there is between a great first cause and the material laws that are sometimes set up as adequate substitute could hardly be more delicately yet more conclusively displayed than it is here, nor would it be easy to state the leading doctrines of the intuitional philosophy more graphically and in better

relief. It is a poem to be studied and re-studied, and always with increased appreciation of its beautiful art and its firm grasp of fundamental principle. There are, indeed, points that are open to discussion, and at least one that involves a most serious issue; but nobody that reads with intelligent interest will fail to see the drift of the argument, and to admit the exalted nature of the implied spiritual philosophy. The concluding stanzas are specially noteworthy for this glorious union of wide cosmical sweep with the little things of earth, for the tender link with which they connect domestic simplicity and innocence with infinite greatness and mercy.

In the "Epic of Hades," his second work, the poet has struck a rich vein, which he has worked to good purpose in his own way. The study of philosophy has given a fresh starting point to culture. One extreme result has been the poetry of sensuous beauty for its own sake, and another is expressed in the prevalent theory of the sun-myth, and in such books of research as that by the late Lord Amberley. It is the privilege of calm philosophers to profit by the lessons of extremes, and to find what of truth they can by holding steadily to the mean. The "Epic of Hades" is a work whose key is pitched nearly midway between the extremes. What fault there is in it is more in method than in conception. There is a beautiful presentation of the ancient myths chosen for the poet's purpose, but perhaps it would have been better had the inductions been minimised, or at any rate separated from the actual myths. The poet's interpretations are acute, farsighted, and exhaustive, but they should have been given as from himself, and not as the result of experience gained by the departed shades in their dim retreats. The distinction is not sharp enough as between the ancient ideals and the idealizing poet. Narcissus, for example, was undoubtedly in quest of a fair Beatrice, as he lingered and longed by his fountain, but to gift him with the insight and elegance of a Rossetti has the look of forcing an extraneous and modern element upon the ancient conception of Hades. Another and cognate objection is to be found in the use of "dear," "my dear," &c., as epithets of affection,

and in such a form of request as that propounded by Narcissus to his visitor when about to depart.

“If there are still
Fair Oreads on the hills, say to them, sir,” &c.

The title of the poem, too, is not quite adequate, as the poet himself admits, but it were a mistake to change it now.

The work consists of three books—“Tartarus,” “Hades,” “Olympus.” In form it thus corresponds in some measure to the *Divine Comedy* of Dante. At first the poet reaches the invisible only in vision, and this assumption might have enabled him to dispense with further machinery, so to speak; but, through a fine sense of fitness and a quick grasp of ideal grace and sublimity, he gets, like Dante, at the environs of Olympus, a fair guide in the form of Psyche. He moves through the two spheres of Tartarus and Hades, and listens to the stories of the shades, till he is met by Psyche—the human soul in bliss—and led on to the awful throne of Zeus himself. Here, as his being is absorbed into the awful effulgence of the Omnipotent Unity, he wakens, and lo! it was a vision. There are epic elements in the work, as this outline of its nature proves, but only a partial reading is needed to show that the poet, as in his “Songs,” is strongest in simple narrative and reflection. His style is severely simple and chaste, his blank verse resembling Wordsworth’s, and the flow of his story being as clear and steady as that of Mr. William Morris. There is no monotony arising either from poverty of poetical expression or unworthy love of minute detail. The poet, on the contrary, throws around his theme all the interests involved in the various personalities concerned. The work throughout is charged with a force and a freshness—a pure ideality and a spiritual activity—quite foreign both to the philosophy of sun-myths and to the “idle singing of an empty day.” The occasion is stated thus:—

“In February, when the dawn was slow,
And winds lay still, I gazed upon the fields
Which stretched before me lifeless, and the stream
Which laboured in the distance to the sea,

Sullen and slow. No force of fancy took
 My thought to blooming June, when the land
 Was deep in crested grass, and through the dew
 The landrail brushed, and the bush banks were set
 With strawberries, and the hot noise of bees
 Lulled the bright flowers. Rather I seemed to move
 Thro' that weird land Hellenic fancy feigned,
 Beyond the fabled river and the bark
 Of Charon; and forthwith on every side
 Rose the thin throng of ghosts."

All that needs to be done here is to give one or two representative passages. Of the shades in Tartarus, Sisyphus may be selected, the theme being one of the most famous in literature for the display of momatopœic skill. Homer's dectyls are at once humourous and inimitable, when he reaches the catastrophe. We shall not look for lively work of that kind here, but the following quotation will show what can be done by choice pithy language without much effort at embellishment:—

" Then as I passed
 I marked, against the hardly dawning sky,
 A toilsome figure standing, bent and strained,
 Before a rocky mass, which with great pain
 And agony of labour it would thrust
 Up a steep hill. But when upon the crest
 It poised a moment. Then I held my breath
 With dread, for, lo! the poor feet seemed to clutch
 The hillside as in fear, and the poor hands
 With hopeless fingers pressed into the stone
 In agony, and the limbs stiffened, and a cry
 Like some strong swimmer's, whom the mightier stream
 Sweeps downward, and he sees his children's eyes
 Upon the bank, broke from him; and at last,
 After long struggles of despair, the limbs
 Relaxed, and as I closed my fearful eyes,
 Seeing the inevitable doom—a crash,
 A horrible thunderous noise, as down the steep
 The shameless fragment leapt. From crag to crag
 It bounded ever swifter, striking fire
 And wrapt in smoke, as to the lowest depths
 Of the vale it tore, and seemed to take with it

The miserable form whose painful gaze
I caught, as with the great rock whirled and dashed
Downward, and marking every crag with gore
And long gray hairs, it plunged, yet living still,
To the black hollow ; and then a silence came
More dreadful than the noise, and a low groan
Was all that I could hear."

In the second book, which contains "Hades," some of the most attractive myths—with poetic themes and romantic interests—are treated with literary skill and artistic finish. The pathetic story of Marsyas, for example, so delicately touched by Mr. Arnold in his "Empedocles," is here graced with a setting that marks good taste and dignity. There are passages that express with subtle appreciation the glories of perfect harmony, and the raptures that come from experience of the inner soul of music. The contrast drawn between the song of Marsyas and the song of Apollo—the one of love, the other of life—is strong with significant discrimination and intuitive gaze. Here is the unshorn god of youthful fire in the very act of filling all the spheres, having it in his intention, in the memorable words of Arnold, "all the Phrygian flutes to tame."

"Oh, to hear the young
Apollo playing ! and the hidden cells
And chambers of the universe displayed
Before the charmèd sound ! I seemed to float
In some enchanted cave, where the wave dips
In from the sunlit sea, and floods its depths
With reflex hues of heaven."

And still more remarkable is the effect of the sun-god's voice when expressed in song, such as only the leader of the Muses could discourse. It is not easy to give adequate expression to the effects of subtle melody, and to cope with the varied graces and delicacies of intricate harmonies. Charles Lamb's "Chapter on Ears" is in its own way an exceptional success, being (particularly in some parts) remarkable for fine intuition, humourous wisdom, and strong judgment. For mere manipulation of words it would be difficult to surpass it. A recent notable example of the

wonderful elasticity of language is Mr. D. G. Rossetti's fine sonnet, "The Monochord," written during music, and to be fitly compared with Lamb, and the singing of Apollo as here reported by the shade of Marsyas :—

“ I felt my secret life
Stand open to it, as the parched earth yawns
To drink the summer rain ; and at the call
Of those refreshing waters, all my thought
Stirs from its dark and secret depths, and burst
Into sweet odorous flowers, and from their wells
Deep call to deep, and all the mystery
Of all that is laid open.”

There is also music in the air, a visionary and romantic loveliness overspreading the landscape, as the poet introduces the fatal Helen.

“ And next I knew
A woman perfect as a young man's dream,
And breathing, as it seemed, the old sweet air
Of the fair days of old, when man was young
And life an epic.”

There is a charm, too, about her story, especially in the idyllic graces that adorn the earlier part of the narrative, and recall "The Enigma" in "Songs of Two Worlds." The story is told exhaustively, delicately, and with real appreciation of essential merits. So is the twofold myth of "Orpheus and Eurydice;" and so, indeed, are all the others. There is a pithy concentration in the description of Deianeira as a fair woman,

“ Whose sad eyes were full
Of a fixed self-reproach,”

and there is much sympathetic tenderness in the treatment accorded to Laocoön. "Narcissus" is rich with the charm of hill and dale, of wood and stream, and there is becoming appreciation of the beautiful in "Endymion," as is exemplified by the quick grasp of one blissful moment :

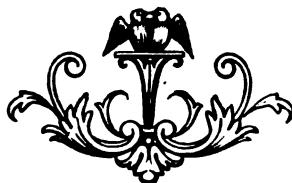
“ When the birds shivered in the pines, and all
The inner heavens stood open.”

It is not quite so easy to put confession into the mouths of the inhabitants of Olympus as it is to recast the stories of

those whose dwelling-place is in Hades, and thus the third part of the poem gradually becomes a wrestling with the immensities and the verities. It is characterized, however, by the same concentration of purpose, the same pith and adequacy of expression, the same quickness and delicacy of intuition and sentiment, as mark the preceding parts. No real lover of poetry that is rich in intellectual grasp, and in versification that is beautiful in its simple propriety, will pass any one of these myths by without careful and studious attention. Here, as in "Songs of Two Worlds," the poet has a distinct object before him in his desire to be true to himself as an artist, and, above all, as a man. In the words of his own "Apollo," one finds the poet's theory as to what is best and most beautiful—the sum of what he has achieved by close sympathetic observation of his fellows, and ardent wrestling with the Divine :

" There is a Height higher than mortal thought ;
There is a Love warmer than mortal love ;
There is a Life which taketh not its hues
From Earth or earthly things, and so grows pure
And higher than the petty cares of men,
And is a blessed life and glorified."

THOMAS BAYNE.





Britannia on the Boulevards.

SHE is everywhere. I see her straight from Regent Street and Piccadilly; from the counting-house in Mincing Lane, the bank in Lombard Street, or the little office in Warnford Court; from the smoke and turmoil of the mighty seats of industry, from the fat acres of the upland shires; I can pick out her faultlessly fitting frocks, the well-shaped trousers, the prim and sober dresses, the small, quiet head-gears, and the dainty bonnets on the Boulevards. I have heard the broad, honest tones of her Devon and North Country sons, mingling with the tinkle tinkle of the Swiss cows' bells upon the Esplanade des Invalides. I have seen her, with patriotic spirit, following the fortunes of Thuriot on the course at Longchamps. I have marked her firm, broad shoulders, sitting seriously and quietly in the *fauteuils* at the Opera; and I daily recognize her unmistakeable features in the galleries on the Champ de Mars or in the Trocadero Gardens. In the Babel of many strange tongues is always heard, plainly distinguishable, the broad North-Saxon accent, or the finnicking Cockney tone. If you study the English visitors to the Exhibition, you will discover all the national characteristics. In the Gallery of Magazines we find the thoughtful, patient man of the mechanical mind, winding his way slowly and carefully among the maze of machines, examining, with an interest unintelligible to the outer world, the marvels of mechanical and engineering skill he finds around him. Thus, the other day did I see Mr. Robinson, of the Society of Mechanical Engineers, at Messrs. Appleby's stand; thus every day do I

find some enquirer, sometimes clad in tweed, and sometimes in fustian, intently studying Hathorn's reliance drill at the entrance to the English *annexe*, or watching the simplicity of the new stone breaker outside the end of the same building ; thus among the agricultural machines and implements are to be observed every day the sons of toil on the look-out for novelties and improvements that shall assist the labour of their hands, and bring Mother Earth more completely to subjection. In the art rooms we meet the mass of ordinary pleasure takers, the lazy lotos-eaters of these latter days. Superficial and conventional, they have no respect for labour, and admire the beautiful not in any way for beauty's sake, but simply because it is fashionable so to do. Conceited sciolists they invariably are, having no wills of their own, ever finding their opinions ready made and to hand, and never breathing the fresh and pure air of independent thought and action. It is this class to whom modern England, indolent and with taste untutored is content to commit the lead in matters of art, and to whom are in no inconsiderable measure due the false idea now so prevalent, and the unsettled weathercock art school, whose screeches in arrangements and nocturnes we are called upon, nay almost commanded to admire. The ever straining after effect of modern artists is a growing fault, and until Englishmen and women make up their minds to judge for themselves and refuse to have their taste created for them, it will continue to grow, and we shall soon be as bad as some of our neighbours, with whom these effective unrealities have become proverbial.

Purchasing Japanese curiosities, I find the monied man, to whom peculiarity is art. He is of the race that encourages the manufacture of the old masters, who thinks it a fine thing to be able to say, "Look at my Guidos or my Titians, they cost me so much;" who can see that he has been deceived, and who, even if the pictures were genuine, would derive no pleasure from their contemplation. Wandering aimlessly down the long galleries and among the clustering cases, I come across the Cockneys pure and simple, narrow-minded, self-conceited, and priggish. When they return to

town, they will take good care to let everyone know that they have been to Paris, and pronounce their opinion of the Exhibition with the airs of twenty jurymen. They literally "walk through" the buildings, and profess to have seen all, when they have really seen nothing. I encountered a party of these the other day in the French Court. I was examining an interesting display of glass bottles, many of novel and artistic shapes, for the French see no reason why the objects of every-day use should always be ugly and unsightly, when a giggling quartet, who had spent five minutes at the Baccarat stand, passed where I stood. "Look! beautiful, superb," said one of the men in ridicule, pointing to the bottles. The rest laughed (at the wit of the remark, I suppose), and one woman in all sincerity exclaimed "Why, they are empty. Good gracious! whatever do they want to exhibit such a silly lot of things for?" I wondered what Mr. Kilner or Mr. Breffit would have replied to this countrywoman's enquiry. At the English bar there is a continual clatter of English tongues, and a perpetual swallowing of English viands and English beer, and wherever I wander or turn I am certain to be greeted by the sight or hearing of some English words, and I should think that the case I met with a morning or two back must be indeed exceptional. I was in the Rue Cavezin, hurrying from the post-office to keep an appointment, for which I was already behindhand—thanks to the absurd bureaucracy found in every department of the French Administration—when a big, burly fellow, whose face and dress unmistakably denoted his nationality, stopped me with an enquiry, supposed to be in French, as to the way to the *Roo Noove dee Petit Chumps*. "Speak English, man, I'm in a hurry," I could not restrain myself from somewhat rudely exclaiming, "Och! begorrah, you're an Englishman, come and have a drink," and the joy of the excitable son of Erin at meeting with someone with whom he could hold converse in his mother tongue was so earnest and genuine that I gave in. I looked at my watch, my appointment was irrevocably lost, so we adjourned to the nearest *café*, and over a *bock* he told me how I was the first Englishman he had met during his week in Paris, and how admir-

ably he had always succeeded in mastering the French lingo. I told him I expected that he had never discovered an Englishmen before because most likely, from his correct pronunciation, he was always mistaken for a Frenchman. Honest-hearted fellow, he really thought I meant it.

At all the best *cafés* and restaurants on the Boulevards they have waiters who speak English. I was much amused the other day at a scene I witnessed at one of these. At the next table to me two ladies and a gentleman were holding parley as to what they should order. It appeared that they had just arrived at Paris, and did not wish to dine yet. It was evident that they were strangers to Paris, for they talked of tea, which the French folks consider medicine, as if it were as easily obtainable as in England. Both the ladies said they would have tea, and the gentleman decided to have coffee.

"Hist, hist"—it is supposed to be. French fashion to "hist" when you want the waiter. "Eh, *garçon*, hist."

"Monsieur."

"Tea *pour deux*," holding up two fingers, "*ay café pour ong*," holding up one; "understand?"

"Perfectly, sir," was the waiter's dry reply, in the language in which the jumbled order was finished. I did not hear any further attempt at French.

If you stroll down the Boulevards in the evening, ten to one you will meet someone you know, that is, of course, if your list of acquaintances includes a few friends likely to be in Paris. These tree-lined streets, with their kiosques and seats, constitute the great difference between London and Paris, and no visitors appreciate them more than English.

The *Café Américaine* (Peters), is perhaps the most patronised, and is undoubtedly one of the best, and is wonderfully well situated. At high class places like this, you are certain to get the best quality of "consommation," at a no higher price, and what is of no mean importance to a Briton without a French tongue, you are not likely to get swindled. Some of the *cafés* are essentially French. At them, as a rule, things are a little cheaper; but I should advise Englishmen to shun them. At one of these, a few evenings ago, I

had taken shelter from the rain, when my attention was called to a dispute between a fellow-countryman and a French waiter. The former must evidently have had very erroneous notions as to the price of French brandy—"Five champagne," as they call it—and as he had the fact that it is quite as dear in France as in England impressed rather unpleasantly upon his memory, he is not likely to err in future. He had got caught in the rain, and, like myself, sought shelter, and ordered some brandy. They brought him a carafon holding six glasses. The price of a single glass is 50c., of the whole carafon 2f. He poured out a glass, put down a franc, and called the waiter, who held up the carafon to see how much had been taken, and charged 50c. Having, however, the carafon on the table, the poor man thought he had paid for it all, and set to work to polish the lot off. He, no doubt, had not been a teetotaller all day, for when he had finished he was in a state only to be undressed and put to bed. He rose to leave, but the waiter detained him and demanded a further 2fr. 50c. One could not speak English, and the other could not speak French, and so the matter stood when I was called to adjudicate. I found it utterly impossible to make the man understand. He persisted that he had paid, and would not pay any more. The waiter demanded the price of five glasses at 50c. a glass, but as the man had taken the whole carafon, and had already paid 50c., I argued there was only 1fr. 50c. now due. After a lot of trouble I got the matter settled and hailed a fiacre, enquired the Englishman's hotel, and sent him home to sleep off the effects of his supposed cheap French brandy.

On another occasion I was called to mediate in a matter which did not end so happily for Britannia's son. He was undoubtedly a very hungry man, and I expect my married lady readers will all say "serve him right." He had been to the Mabille (no harm in that), but there he got well into the meshes of a fair French charmer, and as it was still early (eleven o'clock), they decided to drive to the Boulevards, and take some refreshments. He told the driver to go to Hill's, and arriving, gave him three francs, which

he thought a very liberal fare, but the driver demanded 10 f. The Englishman's vocabulary was very limited, and he could not understand the reason of this apparently exorbitant demand. I was passing by, and recognising the man as being an exhibitor in the exhibition whom I daily saw, offered my services. It turned out that the driver had driven the lady to Mabille, and waited at her orders; and now he wished to be paid from the time he had taken my lady up, about eight o'clock. John Bull used strong language, and, being a North Countryman, no persuasion to settle was of avail, so the coacher called a *gendarme*, and escorted by a little crowd, he made the acquaintance of a Paris *Maire*, who ordered him to pay the amount, and through an interpreter (whose cost was 20 f.), advised him to keep out of such company for the future.

I don't think I can do better than commend this piece of sound advice to several other exhibitors and visitors, and as I should not like to spoil its effect by moralising, will say no more.

H. L. NICHOLSON.





THE FOREST OF MELFORD.

A Story of the Day in which we Live.

By A. J. DUFFIELD.

One of the Authors of "Masston; a Story of these Modern Days," &c., &c.

CHAPTER XV.

"**I** WALKED down into the plain. I saw in one place a crowd of women, boys and others. There was a great noise of lamentation going on. I went up to the crowd, and there beheld lying on a clean mat which was spread on the ground another head. A number of women were standing in a row before it, screaming, wailing and quivering their hands about in a most extraordinary manner, and cutting themselves dreadfully with sharp flints and shells. One old woman in the centre of the group was one clot of blood from head to foot, and large clots of coagulated blood lay on the ground where she stood. The sight was absolutely horrible. She was singing or howling a dirge-like wail. In her right hand she held a piece of volcanic glass as sharp as a razor: this she placed deliberately to her left wrist, drawing it slowly upwards to her left shoulder, the spouting blood following it as it went; then from the left shoulder downwards across the breast to the short ribs on the right side; then the rude but keen knife was shifted from the right hand to the left, placed to the right wrist, drawn upwards to the right shoulder, and so

down across the breast to the left side, thus making a bloody cross on the breast. A little stream of blood was dripping from every finger."—*Old New Zealand*. Edited by Lord Pembroke, c. iii., p. 47—48.

On the morning that Estrid drove into Mulberry in company with Ethel, her father, Henry Mackworth, and Salter Thyme, there appeared in the right-hand corner of the *Times* a paragraph to the effect that Lord Paramont and a party of friends had shot two thousand pheasants and five hundred brace of partridges in Melford Forest. The men talked of it as being a heavy bag, and made one or two observations of a light and easy kind; but Estrid took no interest in the question of how the London poulters are waited upon and served by members of the British aristocracy. She was not a sporting woman, and Ethel had nothing to say about it. She was cold, and didn't like coming to Mulberry.

Mulberry is a town of some two hundred and fifty thousand inhabitants, mostly fools. Not the fools who make merriment for indulgent masters and wear motley—nor yet the critics of literature who are supposed to have taken the place of those whose dullness is the whetstone of the wits—but real fools, who serve, it is true, and earn good wages, but get no fun, are incapable of a joke, and are lost to any form of mirth. If any of these multitudinous fools of Mulberry had been asked what they thought of the Old New Zealand woman, of whom Lord Pembroke's Pakeha speaks above, they would have called her in their precise and forcible language a b——y fool. Such fools were the Mulberry people themselves, double-dyed.

Not content with allowing themselves to be robbed of the right uses of their senses, they willingly lent their throats to be scalded with fire, in order that some of their tribe might become rich.

Not *lost* their throats, that is not strictly the truth; they gave them, and actually paid for the hot element which was

to do the work of scalding. If any further evidence be required to show what fools these Mulberry men were, then it can be said that they stripped their children naked, and left them to the mercy of the rich vendors of the sacred flame drops, that they might buy still more. And they have been known to do the same by their wives, and not only to leave these consecrated women stark naked outside, but naked within of any covering which even a little warming food could supply. Wives and little sinless children every day were starved, stricken with cold, and pinched with deadly pangs, in order that the husbands and fathers of these might—not do sacrifice to some beautiful silver goddess or ivory god—but help Mr. Peter Sellswill, and Sir Toby Belch, to buy Bishop's Chase, or some other part of Melford Forest, and which could never have been bought or sold if these Mulberry people had not drank themselves into ardent fools.

It has been said that one reason why Lord Pembroke has for the present relinquished the public service is that he is preparing a history of the daily human sacrifices held in Mulberry, which is to be translated by his lordship's friend, the Pakeha Maori; and it is confidently expected that the old New Zealanders will then send over some of their old women, with a few boxes of *tuhua* or volcanic glass, to convert the Mulberry men from the folly of their ways, and teach them the doctrine and practice of the bloody cross of New Zealand.

That may be so, or it may not. Rumour, we know, has many tongues; what we are at present concerned with is the entry of Estrid into Mulberry. She was in a pensive mood.

"Are you not cold?" enquired Ethel, in a discontented tone, of Estrid.

To which there was no reply, and although Ethel's question was natural enough, seeing that Estrid's wraps being disregarded by her were doing no profitable service, but had fallen from their proper places, yet no one ventured to disturb their owner's mood, so thoughtful she seemed, and yet her beauteous head seemed so to crown the straight

pillar of her neck that she seemed not so much like one in a pensive mood as in a mood of command.

Salter Thyme, who, with all his waggery, knew a good deal, and might be likened to a well-constructed firegrate, which could make a bright fire even by means of ordinary fuel, had been giving Estrid a notion of the size of Mulberry.

"Why," said he "there are more than two thousand houses in Mulberry consecrated to the praise and worship of Bacchus."

And how in the world Thyme came to trench upon such a subject cannot be explained.

"I thought," remarked Mackworth, "that Bacchus was the god of wine. If you had suggested temples of Moloch instead, I should have heartily agreed with you."

"And who is Moloch?" enquired Ethel, with a languid air. She had now drawn close to Estrid, and was reclining her head on her friend's shoulder, like one in need of warmth and protection.

"Moloch," said Mr. Hillen, "was the god of the Ammonites, whose anger could only be appeased by a meal of women and children served up hot."

"Papa," said his daughter, "how grateful you must be that you were born a happy English child."

"Well, my dear," said her father, "I am constantly finding some new reason for being grateful, and as that noble gentleman whom all the world calls Don Quixote (and not more than a few thousand people in it know that he was not a drivelling idiot) once said, 'If I be unable to return the favours I receive in kind, then do I publish them, so that men may know to whom I am bound.' I cannot offer a child to the gods, but I can publicly thank them for their gift of one."

They all laughed at this gallantry in an old gentleman, and Ethel was thoroughly delighted.

They were now drawing near to Mulberry. The heavens above and the earth beneath bore testimony to the fact that Mulberry was now not far off. The land of Goshen was not more distinctly marked from the land of Egypt on the day

of the plague of darkness than was the hideous blackness of Mulberry from the free and dancing light of Melford Forest. A great and black cloud hung over Mulberry as Estrid, with her friends, drove near. The roads along which they travelled were coated with black mud. The sheep, which fed unwillingly on the soot-dyed grass in the melancholy and adjacent fields, looked like so many adult chimney-sweepers going about on all fours. There were no birds and no flowers, only a land of sooty darkness.

"Why did you wish to come to this dreadful place?" inquired Ethel of Estrid, as they alighted at the front door of the Paynim Hotel.

To which Estrid returned no other answer than a silent, somewhat sad smile. Her face was very pale, but the colour of her lips gave no sign of the presence of cold or weakness.

Ethel began to think that Estrid had been taken in the toils of Salter Thyme. The clergy were very fond of taking ladies to see the great spheres in which was carried on the Church's work. It was, Ethel thought, their way of making love. At any rate, Estrid and the parson strolled out together, and the others were left to shift for themselves.

Estrid had not seen much of any world, except the world of London; and even of that she knew nothing south of the Thames, or east of Charing Cross. It was Mackworth who, altogether unconsciously, had stirred in Estrid the desire to see Mulberry. He had given to her some poetical description of the vileness and the unnecessary evils of the place, and she had become fascinated with his uncommon and touching pictures of the Mulberry landscape. This was during their stay in Arran, when Mackworth, with his keen sympathy and unselfish intellect, was using both to tell to Estrid, during their rambles, how the marvellous wickedness of Mulberry might first be alleviated and then removed, and this topic of conversation was renewed from time to time, at Estrid's own request, when the day was fine, the moors were ringing with the joy bells of health, and the spirit of the breeze would leave its damask mark on every cheek it kissed.

Mackworth had really taught Estrid all she had as yet

known of the arts—those fine creations of some of the finest men who have lived in the finest times and in the finest climates of the world ; it was he who unfolded to her the uses of the fine arts ; and because he was well able to do this without resort to the jargon of mere critics, and could show to Estrid how Art brings out into clearness and strength that which Nature has already written in us in faint pencil lines, she, with her comprehensive, though as yet, unschooled, unpractised wit, lent to all of it a willing and glad ear.

Then she came of herself to learn from what she saw, how that Art can also debase, where it does not ennoble—and that, to the profane the sweetest and holiest of things Art simply makes them seem ludicrous, and even provokes a savage desire to mar or destroy them.

Estrid was now about to enlarge this wonderful experience, and to buy, at some cost, an increase of knowledge. She and Thyme passed through Dean's Walk and Bishop's Close on towards a place known in Mulberry as Cupid's Alley, and Estrid, without knowing what she did, turned, of her own accord, into this notorious *cot-de-sac* before Thyme could prevent her. She was dressed in a fitting manner to encounter the cold and somewhat damp day, and she wore besides

“A countenance in which did meat
Sweet records, promises as sweet.”

Thyme could certainly have restrained Estrid from entering this den of thieves and gillfights, but that she had turned its corner before he was aware of where she was going, and Estrid had gone merely because she saw a number of her own sex apparently idle, and sitting or standing at the doors of houses in listless indifference. As she came nearer to some of these, and saw their faces to be gathering upon them expressions which appeared to approach a diabolical scorn, mingled with the fierceness of hate, and discerning also that there was no exit at the other end of that accursed bag, she suddenly turned to return to the Dean's Walk.

A voice from one of the upper windows, however, called out to her companions, using a phrase for their guidance

which must not be repeated here. The voice had the effect of collecting a knot of girls who speedily surrounded Estrid. Thyme was likewise laid hold of by another set of these lost sheep, and hustled against a wall.

Thyme although taken aback, kept his wits about him and his eyes on Estrid. This the wretched girls observed, and it was their wicked purpose to keep the two as far apart as possible, for nefarious reasons of their own. There was much levity, and a perilous approach to indecorum that might, had it been reached, have driven mad the one noble woman, who alone of all that awful herd of fallen beings stood bending yet erect.

A tall man in blue uniform, with a black beard, surmounted by a dark felt helmet, here walked with measured steps down the swarming alley; it proved to be a merciful interposition of the majesty of the law.

Estrid was not afraid, but she was struck dumb; she neither understood the words addressed to her, nor had she any of her own with which to answer the looks and tones of those who had gathered about her. She knew not what to do. They asked her no questions, made no demand, they were simply lashing themselves into a rage of longing jealousy, apparently on account of her great beauty and tender loveliness, which in a brief space would have ended in Estrid being trampled under their feet, and beaten down, at least in outward show, to the level of their own most hateful filthiness.

When the man in blue appeared, all that vile and compact crew of fallen angels fell to pieces, dispersed, and slunk out of sight. Estrid who now caught sight of the constable went to him, and would have besought him to get her a cab, but Thyme, who had been in great trouble, interposed in time, offered his arm to Estrid, and they hastily left the infamous court together. The Paynim Hotel was close by, but Estrid insisted on Thyme calling a cab, and when one came she requested him to tell the driver where to go to, she then pulled up the window and left the parson to do with himself whatever he might please.

Thyme was sorely vexed, indeed he was cut to the quick.

He walked leisurely and thoughtfully after the cab, but not seeing it his thoughts assumed an accusing attitude. He began to feel himself in some sort responsible for the awful scene of that human wreckage which Estrid had witnessed. The more he thought, the more ashamed and horror-stricken he became. He was convinced that Estrid would never willingly make of him a companion again, and as he realised this possible calamity, his heart became touched—and he would have been glad to hide himself in the darkest corner of some lonely place, where he could weep and pray, and recover his faith and reason.

"You look very pale—what is the matter? Where is Miss Fount?" This was Mackworth, who was sauntering past, engaged in a favourite pursuit.

"Oh, Mackworth," said Thyme in earnest thanksgiving for the company of a human being with whom he could exchange his thoughts, "I am delighted to have met you."

"Where is Miss Fount?" continued Mackworth, alarmed at Thyme's appearance and his being alone; for he had been told that Estrid and he had gone out together to see the town.

"She has returned to the hotel."

Mackworth at once darted off in that direction, but Thyme called to him, begged him to stay, and he would tell him what had happened. This Thyme did, as well as he could, but his feelings being still strongly wrought upon, he undesignedly left an impression on the mind of Mackworth that Estrid must have gone through a greater scene of horror than was really the case.

"How did it end?" enquired Mackworth, now standing still for a moment to look Thyme in the face.

"It ended like the sudden calming of a raging sea, but the effects of the storm remain alone on my shores," said Thyme, with emotion; and Mackworth and he continued their walk through the crowded streets, Mackworth unmercifully plying Thyme's ears with much unsavoury knowledge of Mulberry, apparently acquired by his own labour, all relating to the growing evils of the place.

But Thyme would constantly return to Estrid; and as he

did so, the demoniacal women of Cupid's Alley crowded into his thoughts and hustled them, as they had hustled him really and bodily. For his bitter reflections and deep long-drawn sighs, Mackworth gave him some of his own well-used musings, such as :

“ Ah, wasteful woman ! she who may
On her sweet self set her own price,
Knowing he cannot choose but pay—
How has she cheapen'd Paradise !
How given for nought her priceless gift,
How spoiled the bread and spilled the wine,
Which, spent with due respective thrift,
Had made brutes men and men divine.”

To these lines Thyme could not help listening ; they were doubtless as true as they are beautiful, but his anxieties were of a more practical kind. Mackworth was not in love, like himself, or he could not harbour such imaginings, or be content to drawl them out to the cold and empty air. To Mackworth, he thought, woman was an artist or a handmaid of Art, by whom the world was to be beautified, and the golden age be brought in. To him, Thyme, woman was the counterpart of man, and the one sole beauty of the world ; and the only gold in it which was worth hoarding that which man and woman found together when hooped with God's ring.

“ How many people do you suppose have grown rich by means of your Cupid's Alley ? ” inquired Mackworth.

To which Thyme said he neither knew nor cared.

“ Somebody, I think, should care,” returned Mackworth, in his somewhat slow but penetrative speech. “ Let me ask you, then, this,” he continued. “ At how much would you estimate the loss to yourself, to me, to all who know her, to the whole world, by Miss Fount becoming an inmate of Cupid's Alley ? ”

“ Such deadly blasphemy cannot be conceived,” said Thyme. “ You might as well speculate on the drunkenness and depravity of God.”

“ I tell you,” continued Mackworth, “ that Sir James Bomzley, Tom Strawless, Newman the picture fellow,

Pewster, Copeton, and many others of your acquaintances, are rolling in wealth which springs from wells sunk at such cost as I have suggested."

"This," said Thyme, "is an unnecessary, hateful subject of talk. If I were to come on such in any book I was reading, I would throw the book away."

"I have no doubt you would," said Mackworth, whose mind being completely divested of malice, and himself utterly devoid of cynicism, could say things on which other men dared not venture. He added, "The first thing you would do after throwing away the book would be to get a cigar, and then some brandy and water."

"There's no harm in that," said Thyme, who winced a little.

"I do not say there is; but what I do say is that a man who has not the courage to look a danger in the face, and who, to smoke a cigar or to save his boots from the mud, would refuse to rescue a lamb that was in danger of being worried, is not a man fit for the battle of life, or worthy to share in any one of its triumphs.

Thyme made no answer to this, except silently to wish that Mackworth was with the old gentleman, so called by the fashionable clergy, perhaps because he bears the name of Prince in some of the authorities.

"Put it in this way," said Mackworth, who misconstrued Thyme's silence; "say that Bomzley, Strawless, Newman, Pewster, and the rest, had actually prepared that scene for Miss Fount, and were responsible for all that happened or might happen, would that move you?"

"I think you are talking in an excited, exaggerated tone," said Thyme—using phrases that are inapplicable—and common words in an unnatural sense."

"I assure you that I am not—and you know well enough besides that I am not in orders," retorted Mackworth, who could not be brought to believe that all men are not equally enthusiastic in considering and dealing with some of the problems of our national existence, and which press themselves upon our notice without aid from the illustrated newspapers.

They had now walked round Mulberry Cathedral, and through some of the streets in its vicinity, thus talking :—

“ That is one of Bomzley’s houses,” said Mackworth, pointing with his stick to a miserable little brick building which peeped out from under one of the gargoils of the great church, with as much design in the house as there is in a cigar box ; “ and you will perhaps not be astonished to hear that the knight gave seven thousand pounds for that pigstye.”

“ How do you know these things ?” inquired Thyme, who became a little softer in his manners towards Mackworth as they drew nearer to the Paynim Hotel.

“ I make it my business to know them,” was the reply.

“ Just as I make it mine to find out who will best serve me with Principes and old Cognac,” said Thyme, not unpleasantly, for he had no wish to enter upon a quarrelsome argument with Mackworth on a subject which he greatly disliked.

“ I am afraid,” was the reply, that I am a good deal more lax, but if I smoke one of your Principes will you come with me and look at a few more private mints ? I can show you in less than five minutes a marvellously constructed money-making machine.”

“ Well, what is it ?” said Thyme in an unguarded moment.

They walked into another street somewhat broader than the others, at the corner of which was a house of the ordinary style of architecture, but daubed in front with gaudy paint, bedizened with gold, and tricked out with brass and coloured glass.

“ There it is,” said Mackworth, again pointing, his dark eyes giving to his pale and haggard face a wild and almost fierce expression, as he said to Thyme :—

“ You send a man, or woman, through one door of that glittering machine, stamped with a heavenly image, and he, or she, comes out at the other changed into the image of Sir James Bomzley, a beast endowed with human speech, and capacious pockets, and who has the singular advantage of being one of your friends.”

Thyme did not like this kind of talk, indeed it was highly displeasing to him ; and in order to escape hearing any

more "drink fanaticism," as he called it, he held his tongue—cast a careless look at Sir James Bomzley's splendid public house—or Stygian Exchange—as Mackworth called it, and proceeded to the Paynim Hotel. They reached the door together as Ethel and her father were coming out.

"Where is Estrid?"

"Where is Miss Fount?" exclaimed daughter and father in one breath.

Neither of the men could tell, and one of them looked as if he had been suddenly stricken with madness. This was Thyme, and he said—his mind being possessed of the demoniacal woman whom he had encountered in Cupid's Alley,

"I placed Miss Fount in a cab at her own request in Dean's Walk, and told the driver to come here, and I saw him drive off."

"Why on earth did you not accompany her?" exclaimed Ethel, whose experiences of Mulberry were of the most painful kind.

"She expressed a wish to come alone," said Thyme, whose recollection of how this expression was conveyed brought him intense anguish.

"A cab to come from Dean's Walk here?" demanded Mr. Hillen. "Why, it is not five minutes off." And his face began to assume a look of perplexity not unmixed with anxiety.

Ethel in the meantime had darted within the hotel to inquire if perchance a lady had lately arrived and gone to a room.

No—no lady had made her appearance.

Ethel could think of nothing but to make Thyme go over again the particulars which he had already given of Estrid's taking a cab, and insisted on coming alone to the hotel.

"What led to this sudden change in your plans," inquired Mr. Hillen. "I thought you had both gone out to see the town."

"Oh," answered Thyme, in great confusion, "we came suddenly on a very unhappy street scene, and Miss Fount, I think, became frightened."

"Miss Fount," echoed Ethel, becoming more and more inflammable, "was never frightened in all her life."

"Frightened, perhaps, I ought not to say," answered Thyme, who was simply expressing his own feelings, "for she came on by herself, and insisted on so doing."

"Then where is she—what can have become of her?" continued Ethel, whose only resource in this painful dilemma was putting the same question in a hundred different forms.

"We had better go inside," said Mr. Hillen, and he and Ethel and Thyme proceeded within. Mackworth remained without, standing, and in thought.

"I think," said he, after a pause, "I know where to find Miss Fount"—and was about going off—and had already hailed a cab, when Ethel came and took him by the arm, and exclaimed :

"Where? How can you know? You will—you must, at least, take me with you!"

Mr. Hillen consented to this, and Mackworth drove off to a well-known part of the great town, some two miles away from Dean's Walk, and became, at every step the horse took, more and more convinced that he knew where Estrid would be found, and he was likewise now glad that Ethel had come with him.

"Do you really think you know where Estrid is?" Ethel began, the moment the cab, leaving the thundering stones of the street, found itself on the noiseless pavement of the Val de Travers.

"I think," said Mackworth, "that we shall certainly find her," smiling as he looked in Ethel's face, which bore an expression of excited wonder, and he smiled because he could see that she attributed to him some occult power over space, or the darkness, or the limits of our mortal frame; and, indeed, with so sudden a flash of thought did Mackworth come to the conclusion of his reasoning, and find the solution of the difficulty in which they all found themselves, that he could sympathise with the feeble mind imposing upon itself, as in Ethel's case, which substituted a supernatural influence for his swiftness of mental vision. It is, however, also true that Mackworth was unable to account to himself

—that which he kept to himself—namely, the calm certainty of his discovering Ethel at the Palatinate Hotel—a certainty which increased in strength at every pulsation of his heart.

“What a darling girl she is,” continued Ethel, who, watching Mackworth’s quiet gaze and pleased expression, as he looked steadily into space, began to find herself, from pure sympathy, full of the same assurance as possessed Mackworth, who answered, without turning his face: “She is a queen!”

Mr. Hillen and the young Vicar were differently occupied. “I have not,” said the first, “tasted or cared to taste the fine old whiskey of Scotland for some years; but I feel as if I had got into a Scotch mist—or a Scotch mist had got into me, and only Scotch whiskey will avail to warm and fortify my chilled spirits.” So he rang a bell, and gave his orders.

Then he began in his gentle fashion to heap what would have been curses in the mouths of other men on our large modern hotels, which he called voluntary dungeons, where a man can take himself into custody, remain a prisoner, pent up in an inhuman Bridewell, where as long as you stay you go by a number and are never called by your own name; the landlord of which is an agent, or manager, or constable, all the servants traders on their own account, and there is not one human feeling appealed to on either side during the whole term of your incarceration but that of suspicion, subtle extortion and downright robbery.

“Do you know Mr. Hillen,” Thyme began in mournful cadences, albeit they were harsh cadences to himself, “I am sometimes utterly wretched when I recollect how my poor father made the money by which he sent me to Oxford, and kept me there, in a style of what certainly was absolute luxury; I have not unseldom regarded my father’s fortune as a sort of brocage: it has been cast in my teeth by others, and Mackworth made to my face, but a short while ago, some fierce and what I think brutal allusions to my father’s calling.”

“Do not think so! Henry Mackworth is incapable of hurting the feelings of a fly, if flies do feel. I only wish,” said Mr. Hillen, “for his own sake that he had some cruelty in his nature, I am sure he would regulate it to right uses.”

"Do you know," struck in Thyme, "that I think you have accurately depicted an attribute of Mackworth which is very strongly developed!"

"I have never observed it," said the old gentleman; "your father's business, I believe, was that of wine merchant!"

"He made most of his money," said the young parson writhing, "by selling rum and gin over a counter, for pence to the poor; he did not himself serve out these liquors, but hired some one else to do so for him. I am sure that he would have spurned to disgrace himself by going behind a counter and selling three pennyworth of gin to a wretched man or woman, already drunk with the same kind of liquor himself had sold to them; but I think it is detestably mean to hire another to do that which you would be ashamed to do yourself. My poor mother I know hated the business thoroughly!"

Thyme had not, as might be supposed, partaken of the Scotch whiskey which Mr. Hillen had ordered for his comfort: he was unquestionably harrowed to the marrow by the adventures of the morning, and Mackworth's talk had cut deep into his heart; and as not even a priest can help feeling now and then some of the mortal weaknesses of our nature, and for simple rest, must give up acting if only for a very brief space, so Thyme opened his grief to a man whom he knew would keep his confession sacred.

"Your mother," said the old gentleman, now freed from the cold Scotch mist, "was one of the most beautiful of women; I knew her well——"

On which Thyme gave a start, and the meaning of it Mr. Hillen knew full well; therefore he modulated his voice, as he continued, "You and your brother Dick were the two finest lads I ever saw, and your father did right in providing you both with the best education he could—quite right; and however you may regret the way the money was procured, let us be glad that it was put to such admirable uses."

Of what a mingled yarn is the web of our life; and how surpassing in interest is the story of real men and women to the poetical imaginings which are the frame-work and foundation of fiction? When we have the life of any man really portrayed to us, sun-drawn, as it were, its hopes, its fears,

its revolutions of opinion in each day, its most anxious wishes attained, and then perhaps crystallizing into its blackest regrets, we should expect to get the greatest lesson of love, humility and tolerance that men have ever read.

Such, doubtless, will be the reader's reflections as the character of the Rev. Salter Thyme is here unfolded before him; and the reader will be further glad to know that these are the reflections of a late intimate friend of our Most Gracious Queen, who gave her much help in writing her books.

Ethel Hillen is a very unsafe guide to the character, or social position, of some of the people whom she knows, and whenever she becomes dogmatic, or is perfectly certain in the information she is imparting, it may be taken for granted that she knows really nothing of the person she is talking about. This is especially the case in what she had told Estrid about Salter Thyme. Ethel had always looked upon the handsome young vicar as the son of a lord at least—he had such a distinguished air, his gait, his attire, the shape of his hat, the perfectly beautiful necktie which only half concealed a handsome throat, combined with a Greek face and most graceful figure, could become no man as did these who did not belong to the aristocracy, and he must have a thousand a-year, if not more. Such were Ethel's imaginings.

Salter Thyme was the son of a man who was licensed to sell spirits to the British public, but who did not sell them but suborned for wages others to do so. To this bad trade he added the selling of fine wines, which he supplied to the Bishop and clergy. No Mulberry clergyman would ever dream of getting his port or claret, his sherry or champagne, his brandy or old tom, from any one but from Richard Thyme, and the clergy of Mulberry did not stint themselves in the use of these fine and benignant beverages ; and Richard Thyme showed how he appreciated the clerical profession by fitting his son Salter to become one of its members. Mrs. Thyme was, as Mr. Hillen had described her, one of the beauties of the West End of Mulberry. On her did her husband lavish the plentiful money which he made out of Cupid's Alley, and several other corner gin-shops which belonged to him in Mulberry, and she did not the less lavish this money on Salter her

favourite son. Hers was a beauty unprotected by intelligence or the cultivation of pure taste, and it was said of her that she allowed many men to cram her ears with words which went much "with the stomach of her sense."

Now, when Mr. Hillen mentioned to Salter Thyme the fact of his knowing his mother, and the son had given a start at the mention of his mother's name, Mr. Hillen intended only to convey to his listener that he had seen Mrs. Thyme—had met her in society—certainly had spoken with her, and therefore had a right to say that he knew her. Of nothing else had he any remembrance; but when the sudden start came from the young parson, then came as suddenly to Stanley Hillen's recollection the whispered scandal, the tale told by

"Some doubtful phrase,

As 'Well, well, we know,' or 'We could, an if we would,'

Or 'If we list to speak,' or 'There be an if they might,'

Or such ambiguous giving out,"

Then what had never lodged in Hillen's brain was made to take up its permanent abode there as a piece of authenticated knowledge.

When Thyme directed the cabman to drive to the Paynim Hotel, cabby was not such a fool as to suppose that Thyme did not mean the Palatinate; at any rate the insolent speculative cabby would try it on. His fare was a lady all by herself, and it would go hard if he did not get something handsome for the job of driving her back to the Paynim when she discovered her mistake. The men who are licensed to drive cabs in Mulberry are no more merciful or polite to women than are those who are licensed to sell to them rum and gin, nor yet even those who without a license deal in their money and lands.

Estrid's thoughts on entering the cab held her eyes and locked up all her other organs of sense. She was, if anything, glad of the quick motion by which she was carried away from the scene which she had been compelled to witness, and of which, in a manner, she had been the cause. But she was chiefly occupied with reflecting on the quick instincts which, with the suddenness of lightning, came and

cut her off with a sense of loathing from the young but hideous faces which came about her in Cupid's Alley. She resented the offices of these instincts. The feelings which came and went—all mostly charged now with dislike, now with hate, and again with disgust—she fought against as if they were traitors, and during that fight she thought neither of time nor space, until the cab stopped at the door of the Palatinate Hotel, a house as distinguished for its size and grandeur as the Paynim. Then when a well-trained waiter opened the cab, Estrid alighted, told him to pay the driver, went straight to a woman clerk who sat in a glass case in the hall, requested to be shown to a room at once, took possession of it, and locking herself within, found some light and strength in many tears and a little sleep.

She had now risen and was preparing to come down, when there came a peculiar knocking at her door.

"Yes," was all the reply; but it was the voice of Estrid, and Ethel then ran to the head of the stairs to announce to Mackworth, who waited below, that the lost treasure was found.

"You darling, where have you been all this time?"

"Here," was the reply.

"Here? Yes; but do you know that 'here' means that you have been lost, that we have been all dead with fright for you, and that papa is dying to know that you are safe?"

"Lost!" exclaimed Estrid, in a tone of voice which plainly told that her mind and soul were still possessed with strange conflicting elements. "Where am I?"

"You are at the Palatinate Hotel, and we are at the Paynim, a hundred miles away," said Ethel in great glee, and helping Estrid to put on her cloak.

"And pray how has all this come about?" inquired Estrid, as she tied a silk bow under her chin.

"Mr. Mackworth only can explain this truly magnificent adventure. I say with papa, that real life after all is more romantic than the romances of all the Waverley novels put together." And Ethel, having secured Estrid, took possession of her as if she had been St. George carrying home the lady whom he had delivered from the dragon which he slew.



CHAPTER XVI.

" Which represents no part of the nation,
But Fisher's Folly Congregation."

Hudibras.

"FISHER'S FOLLY" was a splendid house with pleasure gardens, erected in Bishopsgate, by Jasper Fisher, one of the six clerks in Chancery, which in the time of Stowe was called Devonshire House, and was occupied by the Duke of Bedford. From the fact of its being built by a man of small means, and wholly unsuited to his rank in life, it was always called "FISHER'S FOLLY."

"The powerful and the titled are protected by the vices of mankind."

Charles Reade, Nabal's Vineyard.

As the carriage containing Estrid, Ethel, and Mackworth, drove up to the Paynim Hotel, Thyme who had been watching at the window came out to meet it, and Mr. Hillen went into another room to receive the welcome arrivals.

"I am so glad to see you," said Thyme to Estrid, whom he helped to alight, on which she bowed, and passed up the steps of the hotel with Ethel.

"How came all this about?" Thyme asked of Mackworth, in the very words which Estrid had used to Ethel.

"Just as I guessed," replied he, whom Ethel called the hero of the day—"The cabman drove as a wicked speculation to the Palatinate, Miss Fount, occupied, perhaps much overcome with what she had seen in that valley of death, did not notice any difference between the two houses, and indeed, as you know, there is little or no difference between them; she knew nothing of distance or locality, she entered the Palatinate under the conviction of its being this hotel, she was just preparing to leave her room where she had gone to rest, when we arrived, and we so prevented any inconvenience or alarm; the thing has happened to me before.

" Well, Mackworth, I am very glad. I wish, however, it had happened to me. I congratulate you, I would have given much to have been in your place; as it is I shall remain to-night in Mulberry; make my excuses to the ladies; Mr. Hillen knows where I am going to stay, and what I am going to be up to. Good bye, I will not fail to see you again, perhaps to-morrow."

Mackworth noticed Thyme's excited manner, but supposing it to be in connection with the accusations he inflicted on himself for having been the cause of all that moil, he thought no more of it, and went to join the ladies in a cup of tea, while their carriage was getting ready to take them back to Spencer Grove.

The rest of this chapter, gentle reader, may be regarded as a parenthesis, but although it belongs to a parenthesis to obstruct or interrupt, it is likewise its office to qualify or explain what has gone before, or may follow after, and in that sense it might be desirable that the reader should not skip it, but take it into kindly consideration. It concerns chiefly Salter Thyme, and as that offspring of gin—that handsome product of the Mulberry Vine—will continue to figure in this story until it comes to an end, and although this parenthesis will be long, and may be tedious to some of my young and charming but anxious readers, to others it will not fail to be full of instruction, if not of amusement, and to contain something to lead to thought, it there be little to provoke laughter.

Salter Thyme was very much like his handsome mother—not only in the beauty of his face, but in his inclinations and tastes. He inherited from her the ability to make ease delightful, and to turn, as if by magic, a day of cloud and drizzle into sunshine and pleasure; and he acquired at Oxford the belief that he had only to keep himself in existence in order to confer a lasting benefit on the world.

Once or twice this delightful belief had received a rude shock. He had heard himself called " Hollands," " Gin and Bitters," and Bob Brydges had once addressed him, before a lot of fellows, as " Lemons," the appropriateness of which he could never see; but the tone in which it was uttered he

could not forget. Thyme was very devout, and always delightfully dressed. He was not a hard reading man, but he associated with scholars, and often gave dinners to men who were noted for their pursuit of science, some of whom, however, he had to drop, on account of the levity of their conversation. Brydges he liked much—perhaps because he could drink wine without getting heated, and talk on all subjects without profanity or indecorum ; and yet Brydges persisted now and then in calling him “ Lemons ” at his own table, and even in the presence of some of the dignitaries of the Church. But Bob was not only a gentleman—he worked in earnest at whatever his hand found to do, and he was, besides, a thorough man in all things. This young physician had left Oxford for Mulberry much about the time that Thyme obtained the lucrative cure of Wincote ; and it was to Brydges’ house that the young vicar wended his steps after leaving the Paynim, and with whom Thyme hoped to pass the night.

As Thyme knocked at Brydges’ door, the doctor was coming down stairs, and going in to dine by himself—so that the parson’s visit was not only timely for the one, it was also welcomed by the other.

“ I have come to dine with you ! ”

“ You couldn’t do a better thing ! ”

“ And if I can persuade you to do it, I should like to spend with you the night in the streets. I want to see Mulberry as it is only seen by those who see it through the dark.”

“ For that,” said the Doctor, as they shook hands, “ you will require a pair of spectacles which you can’t buy—at least in this town.”

They sat down to a plain dinner, but admirably cooked, which was served by a maid, who must have been born a waiting-maid, and who, no doubt, will die a better maid than she was born.

“ And what has brought your reverence to my humble cot ? ” inquired the host of Salter Thyme, who, however, lived in one of the best houses in the centre of Mulberry. On which Thyme began to talk of Estrid—of her visit to

Wincote—his further acquaintance with her, and the untoward incident of the morning in Cupid's Alley.

"She is beautiful, is she?" enquired Thyme.

"She is not only beautiful, but she is the cause of beauty in others—everything she does is beautiful. One momentary glance I got of her face, while she stood surrounded by those harridans of this morning, will never be effaced from my memory: it was pity and compassion suffused with love and—"

"Well, well, eat some dinner, or you'll do no walking to night, if that is your desire."

"My dear fellow, it is not only my desire, my life and soul depend upon it. I shall never be able to look upon this angel of love again, much less to talk with her, until I have done that which she has inspired me to do."

"Take the other wing," said the practical host. "And what, pray, may that be?"

"I am going to see if somebody can't be made responsible for the dire amount of evil which exists in this town. I have heard you discourse on preventible disease; Estrid—that, my dear fellow, is her name—makes me hunger to know how much of sin, and crime, and the hideous vices which hang our heavens with black, can be forefended."

"That will take you," said Brydges, "a little longer than it took you to prepare for your 'little go.'"

"Perhaps not. You know, Brydges, although I never told you, that my father made his money and educated me out of the sale of wine and spirits, but chiefly the latter. Had he conducted this sale himself, he could not have made the money he did; but he hired, suborned, as I call it, others to do his work—paid them two or three guineas a week to make for him sometimes twenty pounds in a night. That I believe to be a breach of the law, at least of its spirit if not of its letter, and the ignominy of the proceeding is just now coming home to me."

Brydges laughed from pure sympathy with Thyme's earnest manner, the logic of whose love affair was to implicate his own father as one who, by twisting the law of the land to his own advantage, had not only made a great

pile of money, but likewise had hoarded up a considerable amount of disease, crime, and unnecessary mortality for the next generation of Mulberry men.

"Take some more claret."

Thyme helped himself, and as he kept the glass of ruby cheer between his fingers, he said, "How many Oxford men are there, do you think, in the liquor trade?"

"Not one that I know of."

"Do you know of any Cambridge man who has anything to do with the sale of gin?"

"No."

"Beer?"

"Probably—but what are you driving at?"

"I want to begin at the bottom of the ladder. How many members does Mulberry send to Parliament?"

"Three."

"Are any of these University men?"

"Not one."

"Out of all the town councillors, aldermen, magistrates, overseers, editors, bankers, spinners, merchants, stockbrokers, or any who have aught to do in governing this town, or the making of money in it, there is not one who, having himself heard such glad tidings as Oxford and Cambridge have to tell, has one poor whisper of such tidings to bestow on Mulberry.

"You are an Oxford man, ain't you?"

"I learned something at Oxford just to enable me to get ordained, and that's all. Besides the clergy are not men of business: and Mulberry is chiefly devoted to business, and it is in business—trade—buying and selling, that vice and crime are engendered for the most part, and for the most part supported; and until I can see the influence of Oxford and Cambridge in the above departments of English life, and see it paramount, I shall say that both are nothing better than fashionable hothouses for the growth of ornamental flowers."

"Come, come—your rhetoric is running away with your knowledge: the army—the navy—the bar—my own, the noblest profession of them all, are well supplied both from the Cam and the Isis."

" My dear fellow, I admit all that, but it is the great towns of England which govern England : and the great towns are governed by men who become rich out of the vice and crime of the great towns—England is, therefore, governed by her commonest, most illiterate, grasping, vice-fostering men. You are an Oxford man, and live in Mulberry ; but Oxford never speaks through you to the Mulberry folk, whilst many of their monied class hate you because yon took a double first and could if you liked lick them even at their own callings."

" We are entering upon a subject of great breadth, and not a little depth, and the only contribution I can make to it is this :—Of the science of Government I know little, of the ramifications of our own democratic public life still less, but my business is to govern myself, and if we are to walk about this beastly town for six hours to-night, you will like me take off your boots, change your socks, smoke a pipe, have forty winks, and some coffee at ten," and Bob Brydges proceeded to execute his own will.

At ten o'clock these two young Oxford men sallied out into the streets of Mulberry for the purpose of looking at it on the outside.

" Now Thyme," began Brydges, as they walked down the quiet and sedate street in which he lived towards the bellowing part of the town, " what do you expect to learn by this nocturnal expedition of ours ? "

" I know that I can't learn much in a single night," the parson said, " but I may learn something that will put me on the track of learning more hereafter."

" There's something sensible in that," said the doctor, who began to take an interest in Thyme's uncommon earnestness, and he said, " When we get into the thick of the town I shall want you to keep close up to me—not at my side, but behind me; and if we get into a crowd, keep your fists at your side and your tongue in your mouth, or you may not be able to preach for the next month."

They had not gone far when Brydges turned out of the street into a dark passage, at the bottom of which hung a

red lamp, and under the lamp was a narrow door through which he passed, followed by Thyme.

Here, in a whitewashed room, sat a man of military aspect dressed in blue, trimmed with black. Thyme gazed at the ornaments which hung on the fireplace, and did not derive much pleasure from the sight.

"I shall be at Bomzley's crib and about Handcut's at one; the old place, you know," said Brydges to the officer, who paid great attention to the doctor's words, and who simply replied—

"Very well, sir."

To the utter astonishment of Thyme, Brydges went to a small cupboard in the wall, as if he were at home, took from thence a peaked cap, a short staff, a belt, a pair of handcuffs, and the very neatest dark lantern ever seen, the power of which he tested by turning it upon Thyme and almost blinding him. All these things Brydges proceeded to put into their proper places about his own person.

"You did not know that I was a policeman?" said the doctor to the parson, as they returned up the passage.

Utterly astounded at what he had seen, Thyme begged, to know the meaning of it.

"As I am the author of this new order of men," the doctor began, taking Thyme's arm, "I can tell you, but in confidence. When, not long ago, a notorious miscarriage of justice startled us all, and some of us at least were morally certain that several of the superior members of the force must have connived at the escape of a scoundrel who should have been hanged, and that others of the officers were in the pay of more than one great genius in crime, and that some of the serjeants did not do their duty with regard to three or four fashionable places of midnight revelry, well known to belong to two or three Mulberry men of certain repute, then it was that your humble servant communicated with our common friend * * * * who, you know, has a quick perception and plenty of money, but not a grain of originality, and I offered to organise a small force of detectives if he would bring the plan before the authorities obtain their sanction, and guarantee the expense—the said force to consist only of gentlemen."

"Are you paid, then?" exclaimed Thyme in amazement.

"Of course we are paid," said the practical doctor. "You don't suppose that I undertake to keep down the municipal and imperial taxation of this wealthy town for love?"

"This is very new to me, and let me say very welcome news," said Thyme. "I can see that you may be able to do much."

"Much? We shall make a revolution," said Brydges, in a tone of voice which struck eloquently on Thyme's ear; "and yet," he continued, "you suppose Oxford has nothing to do with governing England, and Cambridge is only known for its oars and bats? Why, I have an old stroke under my orders, whom we shall perhaps meet to-night."

After further explanatory speech of this new order of knights, Brydges conducted the parson by some cross cuts into a part of the town which was lit up by the lights that hung in front of one single house. But it was a house capable of accommodating a thousand men and half as many women.

"Now this palace," said Brydges, "belongs to Sir James Bomzley, Bart., but it was built by Fisher's Folly Congregation; that innumerable race of men whose means are too small to admit of their living in a style of such magnificence without their coming sooner or later to ruin. If I could bring these poor devils into ridicule, as Master Fisher was brought, I should have some hope of being able to cheat old Bomzley of some of his iniquitous gains. Won't you go in and see the congregation?"

They did go in, and what they saw shall be left to the reader's imagination, as well as what they heard, and what one of them felt.

"What can be done with that mighty evil," said Thyme, not expecting an answer and getting one.

"Two hundred and seventy years ago, a nation of men and women guzzled away, but at a very different tap to this. They got drunk however, on such trash, as made them first unnatural, and then drove them mad.; and among these were kings and nobles, as well as the humble peasant of the field.

Perhaps the men most addicted to this sort of intoxication were those who should have set a higher example, I mean the priests : then there arose one man of them, and he a soldier,

“Who by the art of known and feeling sorrows,
Was pregnant with good pity,”

and he brewed another and very different tap, of which, when any tasted they never returned to the old.”

“That’s a parable, old fellow,” said Thyme, “which is not lost, at least upon one who is, I hope, eternally indebted to you.”

“Very well ; now I don’t want you to become a fanatic, for then you will do more harm than good. That gin-shop is Bomzley’s Crib ; you see the entertainment which he provides ; you can’t destroy it except by providing a better. Are you getting tired ?”

“On the contrary, I never felt so full of spring.”

“All right : Cab, go to Handcut’s.”

They arrived at a part of the town called in the tepid humourous language of the Mulberry press, Alsatia ; and our knight of the staff again gave Thyme another lecture, with illustrations, by the aid of the black board of a Mulberry sky.

“This,” he said, “is a fine drinking neighbourhood—a phrase as common in the commercial world as ‘our fine Hyson.’ Every one of these houses, and you observe there are no less than sixteen in this one street, brings in not a small annual income to its owner. But its owner does not live here: quite the contrary, he occupies a delightful villa five miles off in the fresh air, perfumed with flowers, protected from contagion, and surrounded by the taste and elegance of fashion.”

“This,” remarked Thyme, “is a new form of absenteeism to which our Irish friends, I suppose, would not object.”

“Good again,” said Brydges, who had kept a keen eye on the parson’s behaviour, and watched with great interest the effects of his words, and the effect of the scenes through which they passed.

“Now,” said Brydges, “this absenteeism, as you properly call it—and I am grateful for any addition to the literature of our subject—is the mainstay of this damnable traffic—in

other words, it represents what I call an endowed conspiracy for handing down the accumulated vice of one generation to another. If we had time to visit each of these sixteen liquor-shops, we should find a different attraction in each, and all would be full of the poor fools of the Folly congregation, who are enticed there as easily as flies are enticed, and slain. Each house has a different manager, whose income depends upon the amount of gin and beer which he sells, and the competition between these rival managers is not only great and unremitting, it is also absolutely illegal—and yet it cannot be put down."

"What do you find to be the great obstruction?" inquired the parson.

"I am ashamed to tell you that the great majority of the men who evade the law—or at least tamper with its spirit—are the men who are appointed to administer the law. Sir James Bomzley is the owner of thirty of these houses in various parts of Mulberry; Sam Rabens is another; and the Strawless lads have just entered upon this method of what they call making money, and they do make it with a vengeance. Bomzley is a magistrate, so is Rabens, so is the father of these two young men; and all are friends of the whole bench of beaks."

"There is, after all," said Thyme thoughtfully, "nothing infamous in selling gin or beer; but to sell it, or rather to lure other people to sell it, under these conditions, is infamous; and such traffic and traffickers should be branded with infamy."

"And, do you know, my boy, that if you and those who wear your cloth had done your duty, the process of that branding would be as easy as lying, and now it is as difficult as telling the truth."

"Do you know, Brydges, I can't see that. I am deeply anxious to learn. I have learnt much already; but I am sure you will never convince me that this common howl against the clergy springs from anything else but a prejudice founded on injustice." And Thyme spoke with warmth and even emotion.

"You are young yet," said the doctor; "and, for that

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matter, so am I; but I have seen more service than you, and, what is more, I am a duly sworn-in policeman, endowed with a bull's-eye and the right to enter the holes and corners where the bats of the State most do congregate. I am not going to be personal, but I am going to be plain. When you parsons give yourselves to a thorough hospital practice for the cure of souls as we Sangrados do for the cure of bodies, then you can complain of howling and prejudice. Do you think if the members of my profession had spent their time in spouting at public meetings, or they had used their influence in insisting on one book being consulted and studied and implicitly obeyed in the cure and treatment of disease, to the condemnation and exclusion of every other book, and that if each member of the College of Physicians had not gone through great labour and much individual research to qualify him for his work, that the public health would be such as it is, or that we should be able with certainty to save the life of a single human being?"

"I know, Brydges, yours is a hardworking profession," said Thyme, somewhat subdued.

"It is," said his companion; "and like nearly all the hard and good work in this toss-pot world, it is the worst paid and the least cared for by those who are most benefited by it."

"After all, you know, Brydges," said Thyme, getting piqued, "I don't know any professional men who cut such ill figures in a Court of Justice as you doctors. It seems to me that you can get a medical man to swear anything."

"I like a man who can speak out," said the Doctor; "it saves time, for one thing. I would have you know, Lemons, that medical men in the hands of special pleaders are treated with great injustice. It is the special pleader's office to twist and distort and befog and demean. Even the best doctor in the world can be made by a lawyer to appear like a fool or a knave. Let me tell you that you will get good medical testimony in the Law Courts when you have a medical judge to sit in cases where the doctor's testimony is vital, and not till then."

"I am no match for you in argument, Bob," said the

parson, who replied relentlessly, "nor do I intend you to be."

"There they come," said Brydges, "and you had better keep close to me." They both took up a position below a cluster of lamps in front of a big tavern as it is called; but tavern it is not, nor is it ever used although it is licensed as such, as Brydges is now explaining to Thyme—"It is a tap-house and nothing else, illegally used for coining the Queen's image."

This was the Fisher's Folly congregation breaking up and emptying itself upon the town, and for two hours more did the two Oxford men remain in the streets of Mulberry to the edification of one of them, the tenor of whose life was thenceforth altered, for the Rev. Salter Thyme became, to use a well-known phrase, a converted man.

As the doctor and the parson sallied out to look at Mulberry by night, Henry Mackworth was taking his leave of the people of Spencer Grove. Mr. Hillen went with him to the door.

"Did you," he asked of Mackworth, "know that Mr. Thyme's father made his fortune in the wine and spirit trade?"

"I did not," was the reply. "I was told by someone that Thyme was an aristocrat."

The reader has now seen some of the Mulberry people, and it will be difficult to believe that among them were many who, not so very long ago, were freeholders of land in Melford Forest: all of them still have the right to wander through its bowers, to ride upon its mossy billows, or rest upon its sweet grass; to these rights they have become indifferent, and therefore some of the rich people of Mulberry, after first making these poor fools drunk, proceeded to pick their pockets.

HERE ENDETH OUR PARENTHESIS.

(*To be continued.*)



THE FACE IN THE GLASS.

A Tale of All Hallows Eve.

BY ALICE EVÉZARD.

CHAPTER I.

WE were a merry party at Carlton Hall on the thirty-first of October. Maud and Mary Wynne, the daughters of the house; Grace Woodville, an orphan niece of Mrs. Wynne's; and myself, Judith Sylvester. I had been spending the day at the Wynnes'; we were neighbours, and, as it grew dusk, the weather became so stormy that Mrs. Wynne insisted on my staying the night, and sent a message home to my father and stepmother that they were not to expect me. Our house was about a mile from Carlton Hall, but a mile of bad road in the country is a serious thing in wet weather. Indeed, the roads about Woodthorpe (our nearest town) were often almost impassable in the heavy rains.

We were all assembled round the fire in the large old-fashioned dining-room—we four girls, Mrs. Wynne, her two sons Oliver and Maurice, and a college friend of Oliver's, John Livingston, who had been staying some weeks in the house.

It was a very cold night, the wind howled round the house like an evil spirit, and the rain came beating against the windows with each pitiless gust. Suddenly Maud, who had been unusually silent for quite five minutes, exclaimed—

“ It is All Hallows Eve I declare; I had quite forgotten it. Who feels inclined to try their fate? ” she added, laughing; “ we want something to amuse us.”

"Isn't there some charm connected with a looking-glass?" asked Mr. Livingston. "If we are to try our fate, we ought to do it in an orthodox manner. You must teach us all a charm, Miss Wynne. You have so many that you can afford to impart one to us."

Maud laughed and blushed, and then she tried to put on a serious face.

"The orthodox way, I believe, Mr. Livingston, is this. You must go into an empty room by yourself and lock the door, go up to the looking-glass (there must be a looking-glass) with an apple in your hand; pare it and eat it, keeping your eyes fixed on the glass all the time, without speaking a word, and the face of the human being who is to influence your fate in this world will look over your shoulder."

"I should be afraid of doing it," said Grace with a shudder, "one might see anything——"

"Or nothing," retorted Maud with a laugh.

"Never mind, you timid little thing, we won't ask you to go. I suggested it, so I will volunteer to go first, and if I see anything uncanny I will tell you frankly; Mama, is this clock right?"

"Yes, my dear, I believe so, is it very late?" answered the indulgent mother, who had fallen into a doze in her comfortable chair, and woke up startled when Maud spoke to her.

"Oh no; but I wanted to know the time, in case I should never come back again, you would like to make sure, I daresay; a quarter to ten, well, I go first, then Mary and Judith last."

"You will tell us what you see, Miss Wynne?" John Livingston said in a low voice.

"*Cela dépend*," she answered, with a toss of her bright head.

"Mary, I am going to the library, there is a larger looking glass there, and the room is some way off, so that I shall be out of your hearing, which is half the battle, I believe; now, no one must leave the room until I come back."

She took a knife and an apple off the table and left the room.

I was sitting on a couch in the corner near the window, and as Maud went out, Maurice left his place by the chimney-piece, and sat down near me.

"You will not try your fate to-night, Judith?" he said, in his winning voice (we had been friends from childhood, and always called each other by our christian names).

"Why not?" I said.

"Because, I hardly know why—but I feel as if something would come between us if you did; we have always been friends, Judith?"

"Of course," I said shortly, for I thought, perversely, that he was taking too much for granted.

"Well, will you oblige me this once? Do not try this foolish charm to-night."

"You are very superstitious, Maurice," I said angrily. "What harm can there be in a piece of childish fun?"

"None, of course," he said hastily, "I am only asking you this as a personal favour. You know I believe in presentiments, and something tells me that you will repent it if you really go through this absurd nonsense."

I longed to give way, but he spoke with too much authority, and my pride would not let me.

"You have no right to dictate to me," I said proudly.

"No, I know that, Judith; not the shadow of a right, but we have known each other from childhood, and I did think you would grant the first favour I have ever asked; well I was mistaken, that is all."

He rose abruptly and went back to his place, leaning on the marble chimney-piece and gazing into the fire. I would have given anything then to recall my words, but it was too late.

There was silence in the room for some time.

Mrs. Wynne had dozed off again (after one or two ineffectual attempts at waking up) as she generally did in the evening: she was a placid, even-tempered widow, who had always lead a peaceful, prosperous life, and whose only sorrow had been the loss of her husband, whom she had worshipped.

John Livingston was somewhat anxiously watching the

door, and Oliver was teasing Mary and Grace about the latter's cowardice, which Mary warmly denied. What a contrast there was between the two brothers ! Oliver, with his boyish ways, and his round, merry face, looked the younger of the two, although in reality two years older than Maurice. An involuntary feeling of pride and self-gratulation thrilled me as I watched Maurice's tall figure and clever face (not so strictly handsome as Oliver's, but how much more intellectual !), and the serious blue eyes that I was fast learning to know had a light for me, which was wanting in everyone else's. But why should I feel proud of him ? I did not know, I had shrunk from analyzing my feelings,, and he must have thought that I was much changed from the cordial-mannered child I had been some years ago ; for, with a contradiction which might have told much to an impartial observer, I was never so friendly and unembarrassed with him as with his brother.

Maurice was looking very serious now, the firelight shone on his soft wavy light hair, but the mouth under the long drooping moustache was stern and set, and very unlike the winning pleading mouth it had been when Maurice spoke to me. Maud came back presently with a disappointed face. " She had seen nothing worse than her own reflection," she said, when Mr. Livingston joked her about it. Mary's turn came next, but she came back in a very few minutes, declaring she had heard a noise outside the window, and was too much frightened to finish the charm. " It is your turn now, Judith," said Oliver, " I know you are not afraid of anything." For one moment I hesitated, and Maurice looked up eagerly, but my pride was too strong, it was such a foolish fancy of Maurice's, I told myself : so I rose, took my apple, a knife, and the lamp that Mary had brought back with her. I turned as I left the room, and saw that Maurice had returned to his old occupation of gazing at the fire, and then I shut the door.

CHAPTER II.

CARLTON HALL was a very old place, and full of long draughty passages, and a green baize door in the hall opened into one which led to the library. I could hear the wind here more plainly than in the dining-room, and to my fancy, excited by Maurice's presentiment, it sounded like the exultant shrieks of any number of evil spirits. I opened the library door and went in, feeling a tremor of anything but pleasant excitement as it swung back and shut after me, but I did not intend to be frightened. I locked the door with a determined wrench of the key, and going up to the looking-glass which faced the windows, I put down my lamp on the mantelpiece below it. Then I remembered that Mary had heard some noise outside the long French windows. "I will open the shutters," I said to myself, "and then if any thing is outside I shall see it." The shutters were soon open, but I could see nothing outside, for the night was very dark; and, as to a noise, the wind and rain made so much that I could not have heard anything else. I turned to the glass, and took up my apple and began slowly to pare it, looking steadfastly in the glass meanwhile at the reflection of a scared young face, for I was scared although I would not own it to myself. The lamp gave but a feeble light in the large room, and there was something weird and ghost-like about the place ; the heavy crimson curtains swelled with the wind, which came rushing down the wide chimney and rattling the windows, and the knowledge that I was out of the hearing of the occupants of the dining-room did not tend to reassure me, all the ghost stories I had ever heard or read seemed to come back in common accord upon my mind at once, and although I tried to scorn belief in spirits, there was a strain of superstition somewhere in my nature which would assert itself in spite of me, and it was with no small effort at self control that I succeeded in keeping my eyes on the glass. My apple was pared, and I was about to eat it,

when suddenly, without noise or sound of any kind, as it seemed to me, a face looked over my shoulder !

A face I had never seen before, handsome certainly, but such a contemptuous smile curling the dark moustache, and a look I cannot describe otherwise than as snake-like in the black eyes. For one brief moment I retained my senses, the next I fainted away.

I do not know how long I remained insensible, but I woke up to find myself in the dining-room with everybody round me. "Was it real?" I asked involuntarily as I came back to life. At once I was overwhelmed with questions—"What had I seen?" "Was it a ghost?" "Who was it like?" "What had frightened me?" I could not speak; and what had I to tell after all? I had seen a face looking over my shoulder. Well, they would say it was my fancy and I should be laughed at. I had made up my mind to say nothing. Then Maurice spoke, "Do not tease her," he said, "let her rest quietly, she is still quite unnerved, she will tell us all presently." He set the example himself, and going to the other end of the room succeeded in setting them off on a game of bagatelle. When they were thoroughly interested in it, he came back to me and sat down on a low chair by my couch. "You will tell me what has happened, Judith," he said, pleadingly.

I hesitated. "You would not believe me!"

"Nay, you cannot think that, Judith. When have I doubted your lightest word?"

"I saw a face," I said slowly—and the recollection made me shiver—"looking over my shoulder in the glass."

"Who opened the shutters?" he questioned.

"I did."

"Then someone must have come in."

"No!" I said, decidedly; "I heard nothing, felt nothing—only saw that face."

"Somebody came into the room by the window," he insisted. "Why, Judith, you do not believe in ghosts?"

"No," I answered, hesitatingly. "Did you find the window open?"

"No; we thought you were gone a long time, and Maud grew

uneasy, and thought you must be frightened ; so we all went together to look for you, and, fortunately, you had forgotten to lock the door."

"No, indeed," I said, interrupting him ; "I locked the door directly I entered the room."

"Then someone must have been in the room with you," exclaimed Maurice, growing pale with anger. "You will acknowledge that a spirit could not unlock the door, Judith, and I cannot think the face was only your fancy. What was it like ? Oh ! if I could but have caught the man, whoever he was ! You say you opened the shutter. Well, he may have seen you from outside and walked in by the window—nothing easier. I was telling Oliver only the other day that those windows wanted new bolts. A child could open them from outside."

I shuddered. Could it have been really a human being, or, as my excited fancy had pictured, an evil spirit ? What could any man want in the library at that time of night. He was not at all like a common burglar, and if his object had been to rob the house, why should he content himself with frightening a helpless girl ? Besides how did he scale the garden wall ; for there was a high wall round the back garden, out of which a door led into the park-like grounds, which were very extensive, and this door was always locked. I did not know what to think, but Maurice's next speech roused me.

"I will go at once and look at that window ?" he said, rising from his chair.

"You will do no such thing, Maurice ?" I said vehemently ; "you shall not go into that room alone.

"Don't you think me capable of taking care of myself ?" he said smiling.

"Nay !" as I sprang from the couch.

"You are not to come with me, I cannot allow it."

Of course my pride was roused directly, "You have no right to control me Maurice," I said haughtily, "I insist upon coming with you !"

"No, I have no right !" he returned in a changed tone. "Come then if you will."

I felt ashamed of my hasty words, but would not withdraw them, and without attracting the attention of the others, I followed Maurice from the room.

CHAPTER



THERE was a light burning in the library, for I had left the lamp there and no one had thought of bringing it out.

I shivered as I crossed the threshold, for I was thoroughly unnerved.

" You are cold ? " Maurice said hastily.

" No, no, it is nothing," I said, and then I cried as I caught his arm.

" Oh ! Maurice, look outside the window, what is that ? "

" Only the reflection of the lamplight on the wet laurels, Judith. Why, I never knew you to be so nervous before."

But I was sure I had seen that terrible face against the window frame, and it had disappeared as Maurice turned to look.

" Come away ! Maurice, come away !" I entreated, " it is something unearthly. Oh ! don't go near," as he went forward to try the bolt of the window.

" It is unbolted," he exclaimed. " Judith, I was right, the window has been opened, see, here are finger marks on the dusty frame ; they shall repent it whoever they are. Come back to the dining-room, Judith, this must be looked into at once."

I was only too glad to leave the room, and Maurice, when he reached the dining-room, with a hasty explanation of what had occurred, went off with Oliver and Mr. Livingston to make a strict search through the house and garden.

Mrs. Wynne was thoroughly roused for once, and was very much frightened ; she felt sure that the house was full of robbers, and that we should be murdered in our beds.

Grace was more inclined to the supernatural, and thought I had seen a spirit; while Maud and Mary felt sure that somebody had played me a trick.

"But why should they, Maud?" I expostulated, "and, besides, the face I saw was quite a strange one to me."

"Oh! do tell us what it was like!" they all exclaimed.

But I could say nothing beyond that it was dark and handsome, but unpleasant-looking, and I did not like to think of it. I was thoroughly impressed with the idea that I had seen a spirit, and I think by the time the others came back from their search that Mrs. Wynne and her daughters half believed it too.

"Found nothing," said Maud, contemptuously, as they reported their ill-success; "of course not, do you think you could find a ghost? Judith saw the wraith of her future fate, and some day he will appear and claim her." I could not help shuddering, although it seemed foolish, and Maurice said angrily:—

"Really, Maud, I think your jests are very ill-timed. Judith looks quite ill and pale, you really should not talk nonsense so seriously."

Maud looked up surprised, (for Maurice had never spoken angrily to his sister before), and then she retorted—

"And pray what do you think Judith saw, my all-wise brother?"

"Some impudent scoundrel who ought to be knocked down, and who will get his deserts if ever I meet him."

"But how could he get in?"

"Easily enough, there is a public footpath across the corner of the grounds close by the garden door, and we have just found that door unlocked; the fellow found it unfastened and came into the garden, and then when Judith opened the shutter, he only waited for her to turn to the glass, and walked in by the window. The bolts are so old that the slightest shake would open them. It must have been impudent curiosity, for nothing is missing, and there are a good many portable things worth stealing there."

"Are the shutters properly secured now, my dear?" asked Mrs. Wynne, anxiously.

"Yes, mother ; it is quite safe now, now that the mischief is done," he muttered in a low tone.

"Well, then, my dear, I think we had better all go to bed now. I am sure poor Judith wants a night's rest, and so does Grace ; she looks very ill, and it's long past twelve o'clock. Now, Maud, do not talk to Judith too much to-night ; she does not look fit for it, and as she is to sleep with you, I shall blame you if she looks pale to-morrow, for we all know what a chatterbox you are. My dear," she added, turning to me, and giving me a warm motherly kiss, "you must stay with us a few days longer and get over your fright ; there is no one to miss you at home."

I stood brushing my hair before the glass in Maud's room, thinking meanwhile how often people unconsciously touch a painful chord, and make it thrill with agony. Mrs. Wynne's speech had touched the sore spot in my heart.

"No one will miss you at home!" Ah ! I knew that only too well. My own dear mother died when I was born, and my father's second wife, although she was never actively unkind, was not fond of me. My father was completely wrapped up in his wife, she had no children, and I was heiress, not only to my mother's fortune, which was considerable, but to my father's property and estate, for I had no brothers and sisters to share it with me. Ah ! how gladly would I have given it all up if I might but have a little love instead. I sighed as I remembered Mrs. Wynne's words, and involuntarily my hand sought the locket, with my mother's hair in it, which I always wore. 'It was gone !' My exclamation startled Maud, whose fair rosy face turned white.

"What is it?" she said, in a frightened whisper, coming close up to me ; "something in the glass, Judith?"

"No, no ; my locket—what can have become of it?"

"Perhaps you dropped it in the library?"

"But look, Maud, the velvet is still tied round my neck, and the ring on the locket had no opening. It cannot have come off."

"It might break," suggested Maud.

"Impossible ; it was a broad, chased ring, very thick, and not at all worn."

"Then your vision was sober reality," she exclaimed, and then she added hastily, "Why, where is your ring? Gone with your locket?"

The ring (a plain gold one with the words "*Pour toujours*" on it in relief), was one I had worn for years. It was a present from Maud on one of my birthdays, when I was a child, and she had told me at the time, that Maurice had bought it himself, but wished it to be considered Maud's present.

What could have been the man's motive for taking these two trinkets, the dearest treasures I possessed, but to him valueless, it could not have been for gain or he would have taken my brooch and earrings, which were of great value?

"What could be the man's motive?" I said aloud.

Maud, who could not be serious long, burst into a fit of laughter, "Depend upon it, Judith, you have some mysterious admirer, and he wanted a remembrance of you."

But I was not in a mood to take my loss lightly, and besides it was no light loss to me, my mother's locket and Maurice's ring (for I always thought of it as his gift) were dearer to me than anything else. I sat down on the nearest chair and burst into tears. Maud was serious at once.

"I could not help it, Judy, dear," she said, penitently, "but I really am very sorry. Of course the ring is of no consequence, but I am vexed about the locket; one comfort is that I should know it anywhere. Poor little thing, you look quite pale and miserable; don't cry any more, there's a dear, or you will be quite ill. We cannot do anything to-night, but to-morrow I am sure we shall find it all out."

I shook my head doubtfully, but I felt too much depressed to say anything. A vein of superstition lurked in some corner of my mind, for my old nurse, Sarah (the only creature at home who cared for me) had, in my early childhood, taught me to believe in all she herself credited, and although, as I grew out of childhood, I smiled at a good many of the old woman's quaint beliefs and fancies, she had succeeded in giving me an unwilling belief in some old-world superstitions. I wondered what she would say when I told her what had happened.

(*To be continued.*)



THE NIGHTINGALE.

HERE stand I listening
To thy sweet vesper hymn,
Worshipper thou by the moonlight alone.
Soft is thy plaintive song,
Thrill and increasing long,
Cadence and echoes now glad'ning thy home.

Night warbling messenger,
Summer-time harbinger,
Quietly resting on yon willow bough ;
Twinkling the stars above,
Singing to please thy love,
Woodland and streamlet seem cheer'd by thy vow.

Watching the worm below,
Which, to escape a foe,
Ventures not out till the sunset is gone.
O that I could be blest,
Like thee, to take my rest
Free from the turmoil of life's busy throng !

Crescent the moon on high,
O be thou ever nigh,
Timidly hop in the midst of the may ;
Shunning the noisy crowd,
Bright'ning thy mate, and proud
Thus to afford her the charms of thy lay.

Oh, bird of liberty,
Teaching humility,
None but would bid thee still sing in the shade !
Blithely industrious,
Gaily intrusting us,
Stay, oh, stay ! welcome to rill and to glade !

FRED PROCTOR.



TEXTS FROM TENNYSON.

No. 7.

“Death is the end of life; ah, why
Should life all labour be?”

The Lotos Eaters.

OT weather, my brethren, breeds among other objectionable things indolent ideas. Not that I think indolent ideas altogether objectionable on a broiling afternoon in July; but indolence in the abstract has been so condemned by philosophers and preachers since ever I can remember that I have taught myself to agree with them, and even had I not done so, I am sure it is a great deal too hot just now to make the exertion of arguing the point. My text this month, which seems specially applicable when the thermometer registers a great deal more than it ought to do in the shade, was brought to my mind by two circumstances. I was at the Paris Exhibition a few days ago, and whether it was the heat, the young ladies, the odour of the lemon in the claret cup, the good company, or the affability of Mr. H. Antonio Robertson, or the attraction of all these good things together, I could not keep far away from the Canadian trophy corner of the Champ de Mars building, where is erected an elegant temple of worship, profanely known as the English and American bar. This little chapel-of-ease is the only place in Paris where you can get a real good English dinner. Aberdeen beef butchered in London, with English pickles and English salad, can be washed down with genuine English beer, served in a bright English pint pot. It is not to be wondered at, therefore, that Englishmen

congregate there, and upon the day that Duval's girls struck I found myself sitting at lunch time by the side of a philosophical old Englishman, who happened to be a great deal more sociable than the majority of Englishmen abroad, and in the course of conversation I detailed to him the history of the butcher's man who had amassed a fortune and left monuments all over Paris in the shape of cheap restaurants. "He died worth so much," said I, inventing a sum which I thought sufficiently large to lend lustre to the tale.

"I beg your pardon," said the philosopher. "He what?"

"Died."

"Oh yes, he—died."

It spoiled the romance of my story, but it was more the tone, perhaps, than the words that brought the Laureate's lines to my mind, and I have not since been able to get them out of my thoughts. The other circumstance was this.

Henry Gervex sent to the *salon* a picture which was refused on account of its impropriety. An artist friend told me that it was the finest picture of the year, and as I don't believe much in the improprieties, I found out where it was to be seen, and went to see it. It is founded upon Alfred de Musset's poem "Rolla," which, no doubt, many of my readers know. It is the story of a young man who comes into a fortune, and he decides to go to Paris, spend it in pleasure, and then shoot himself. He goes. The last night he spends with his mistress, and in the morning she, knowing his resolve, offers him all her jewels to turn into money rather than that he should commit suicide. The artist has taken for his time the moment when Rolla has got out of bed in the morning, and, half-dressed, opens the window by which he stands. The girl lies asleep on the bed, naked, and Rolla turns round to gaze upon her. Everything is perfect. Her skirt, petticoat, stays, his hat and cane, all are in the picture, it tells its story at a glance, and it was a fit accompaniment to Tennyson's texts. That "death is the end of life" is a very discouraging reflection, and it is well that in the days of strength and energy we are apt to forget it. I have no sympathy with the fiddle-faced fellows who prowl about with the unhappy knack of asking you at

all times, opportune and inopportune, “Where will you die when you go to ?” or some other equally sensible query. If, as man is only going to do here as he ought to do in the hope of being entitled to go somewhere else by-and-bye, I am afraid he will find that he will have the *entrée* to a place not quite so cool and comfortable as the one he expects, and the less we think of the future, and the more we think of the present, the better men and women shall we be.

The answer to the question—Why life should be all labour? is short and simple. If it were not so, we should become a selfish, sensual, and discontented race. The propensity to shirk labour in the present day is doing a great amount of mischief. Men seek now to become rich without it, and our markets are becoming little better than gigantic gambling dens. We hear a great deal about the nobility of labour, but we see little of its recognition. The lowest artisan, whose soul is ten thousand times as big as that of the drunken lord, who revels in lust and debauchery, has no worth in the world’s eyes, while the other is valued by the extent of his acres and the balance at his bankers. There are very few of our titled statesmen who legislate for the working man who would be willing to shake hands with him and have a little sensible talk with him upon his rights and wrongs. If there were, we should not hear half so much of the troubles between masters and men ; we are too apt now-a-days to speak to the coat, and not to the man inside of it. In my mind one circumstance, and one circumstance alone, accounts for the warfare between “Capital and Labour.” There was a time when the master went among his men, enquired after their wives, and sent them little presents ; put up a man’s wages with every baby, and did not brush it off with every death ; talked kindly with the men, took a lively interest in their affairs, and in return the men took an interest in his. See how it is now. I know a hundred factories where the master never sees his men ; they have no idea of him, except as being a rich man, for whom they earn money. The “limited company” mania did no end of mischief ; in such concerns there is no master, and the only thing the men consider is how to get the most money for the least work.

Who says the nobility of labour is recognised? Look at the Paris Exhibition. Who gets the medals and prizes? How seldom even is the service of the workman acknowledged. Doulton has applied to the objects he exhibits the names of the men who wrought some of his finest things, and he took over George Tinworth to Paris to let him benefit by living a few weeks in an atmosphere of art. All honour to him. But his case is an exception. Even in the receptions of the French Republic, whose motto is "Liberty, Fraternity, and Equality," there are first and second class saloons. Until the nobility of labour becomes something more than a theory, there will be a general desire to shirk work, and we shall grow indolent under the slightest excuse, especially when it comes in the form of hot weather. I do not wish to set myself up as a model of perseverance and hard work, for I state candidly I had half a mind to leave undone my little sermon this month, and go up the river instead in a nice steam launch, with the knowledge that some hampers aft contained bottles of Roederer and seltzer, and somewhere about was a goodly quantity of lobster salad, mixed by a master in the art. But I declined the invitation, as an example to others, and having found the shadiest place I could, in my shirt sleeves I have endeavoured to stimulate all my readers to work even on a hot summer's day; and before I finish, let me add just one thought: if you ever are led to say—

"Death is the end of life; ah, why
Should life all labour be?"

and then have a great inclination to give yourself up to pleasure and idleness (if idleness and pleasure can go together), remember three things: First, that it costs twice as much to live an idle life as it does a laborious one; of course, if you have unlimited wealth this is of no importance to you. Secondly, that although the world is slow to honour labour, it is very quick to condemn laziness, for the reason that it is constitutionally uncharitable; and, thirdly, that if ever you do once become lazy, it is ten to one if you will ever be anything else again. It is like rolling down hill, you run down much quicker than you can climb up. A man is

not a man who does not work, and an honest man works through good and ill nobly and conscientiously, and is never daunted by the thought that death is the end of life, for when he dies he will leave behind him the harvest of his labours, to be reaped by hands that shall be raised to call down blessings on his memory.

H. L. N.

MY DEAD LOVE.

IF I called you, would you come,
Dear, across death's pallid sea,
From the grave which is your home,
Back to life, to love, to me?

Nay, though autumn draweth near,
Days are days as when we met,
Still I would not have you, dear,
Meet me here, or meet me yet.

There is much that I must see,
Much that I must learn and do,
Ere I feel that I shall be,
Fit for death, and fit for you.

HENRIETTE A. DUFF.





OLLA PODRIDA.

LORD BEACONSFIELD exemplifies in himself the axiom that extremes meet. He was a commoner—he is now a peer; he was a Radical—he became a Tory; he refused a peerage—then accepted it; he rejected the Garter—now, lo and behold! he dons it. Let us pray that his lordship's little characteristic inconsistency will not, by-and-bye, lead him to alter his “peace with honour” into war.

There is no denying that the new knight of the Most Noble Order of the Garter is an eminently clever man. The designer and architect of a most brilliant and successful career, he has lived down caste prejudice and done that for his adopted country—whether the ultimate results may prove him wise or otherwise is beside the question—that has made it, if not a power to be dreaded, at least a factor to be considered in European matters; and this, too, at a time when its prestige was sadly on the wane. We were popularly supposed to be a nation of shopkeepers, but he has shown that, if need be, we can shut up shop and become the soldier when marauders are about. The man that dispels such an illusion of the European mind, and puts England in her rightful place amongst the nations of the world, deserves well of his country, be he Whig or Tory, and it is pitiful to find opponents so prone to decry his handiwork. It would be a hopeful sign of a healthy Opposition party were we to find it chivalrous and magnanimous enough to gracefully acknowledge merit and praise when and where due, instead of mechanically and systematically disparaging such work, seeing it and behold, it is bad

—very bad, for the all-sufficing reason that it is the work of a political opponent.

A life of the premier has been published bearing the imprint of the well-known S. O. Beeton. Written from a radical standpoint, it has one radical error—partisanship, hostile and bitter. Lord B. gets an awful whig-ging. Perhaps, however, his Lordship can stand that, it may not hurt him, and it amuses the author of the work, and a large proportion of the numerous readers this carefully compiled work is sure to secure.

Captain Burnaby is on for another ride, not through Khiva this time though, but through the Midland Counties to Westminster, as the M.P. for Birmingham. Money makes the mare to go, so he ought to reach his destination sharp now that he has caught a young and wealthy heiress.

Silence! Gentlemen of the House of Commons. A message from Her Majesty the Queen. The message is read, and modestly asks for a further provision for His Royal Highness Arthur William Patrick Albert, Duke of Connaught, and a dozen other places, Prince of Saxe-Coburg, and ditto. The House cheers. The Chancellor of the Exchequer rises and gives notice that he will move that the House shall resolve itself into Committee, "to take into consideration Her Majesty's *most gracious message*." The House again cheers. By all means if this Duke of this, that, and the other, cannot make sufficient out of his younger brother's favourite pastime of gambling at cards, let us pauperise him; but good gracious where is the graciousness of Her Gracious Majesty in "her most gracious message." The phrase savours muchly of sycophantic cant.

Sir Garnet Wolseley is the modern Ulysses who has sailed from the Atlantic Ithaca to the bowers of the fair Calypso. Let us hope that, under his rule, Cyprus may flourish and cypress decay.

St. James's Magazine.

SEPTEMBER, 1878.



MARTINDALE'S MONEY

A NOVEL.

By the Author of "Old as the Hills," "Kate Savage," &c., &c.

CHAPTER XVI.

"SAY A HUNDRED OR SO."

ABITTER wind swept through the streets of Hexbury, and in other respects also the night was about as disagreeable as it well could be. Yet there were numbers of the citizens hurrying up the High Street. Most of them, when they got to the top of the hill, turned aside without passing through the ancient "Bar," and crossed a quadrangle to the entrance of a big Assembly Room. The great doors swung to and fro perpetually, as the free and enlightened electors arrived in a steady stream. The hall had been cold at first, and men had stamped their feet and rubbed their fingers to keep the blood circulating; now it was beginning to get hot—the air was heavy with the breath of some three thousand closely-packed human beings, and the gas from a vast number of jets did its part in assisting to poison the atmosphere.

It was to be a great show-night of Martindale's supporters, and a fluent Viscount had been sent down from London for the purpose of making the electors a speech which should be serviceable to the Conservative candidate.

The leaders of the party were present in strong force upon the platform. Alderman Chadwick was prominently there,

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with an entreaty that harmony might prevail expressing itself on his every feature ; Colonel Hawkley and Major Munns might also be observed in the background, where they had their toes trodden on, and found a difficulty in breathing. Martindale and the Viscount were, of course, to the fore, and had an ample opportunity of viewing the multitude of upturned faces before them.

Speeches of the usual kind were made and applauded to the echo. The Viscount, of course, was the leading performer, and delighted his audience with the scornful vigour with which he assailed his absent political opponents ; but lo ! when the noble speaker was in the midst of a glowing period, there was a tremendous crash, and the shivered windows of the hall, broken from without, fell upon the upturned faces of the crowd. The night wind rushed in at scores of impromptu apertures, and simultaneously most of the lights went out. Then followed a scene which the papers afterwards described as one of wild disorder. The speaker was compelled to sit down, and the huge crowd surged and struggled, each unit of it trying to get out at one and the same time—some with the view of wreaking summary vengeance upon the invisible perpetrators of the outrage, others desirous only of safely reaching their homes before a worse thing should happen to them.

In vain did the chairman shout and gesticulate : the crowd ignored him. Cries as of pursuers and pursued came from without and aggravated the confusion.

Finally, the platform gentlemen considered it expedient to retire, and take steps to bring home the outrage to their opponents.

"I had no idea the fellows down here were so lively, now the hustings days are over," said the Viscount, as Martindale drove him to the station. "This row was a great mistake on the other side ; it will give you a lift rather than otherwise."

Then he got into the mail-train, by no means regretting that his eloquence had been cut short, and slept soundly until he got to town again. George was driven home in company with the Colonel and Major Munns.

Both the retired military men were full of excitement about the events of the evening, and bawled their observations across the carriage, to the disgust of its owner. He was moody and out of sorts; his nerves were highly-strung, and he found himself wishing either that the whole business were over, or that he had never entered upon it.

He knew that during this election time his money was running as through a sieve, and Mr. Croft had of late convinced him that his resources were not so extensive as he had at first supposed. He could have faced it all better if he had had some familiar friend, into whose ears he might have poured his confidences, and with whom he might have taken counsel. In the first flush of his new possessions he had been more self-reliant than he had ever been in previous years. But now he began to feel a yearning for the sympathy of some person who would listen to his talk about himself—a wish to hold some such converse as he had used to hold with Grace Summer in days long past. He knew that it was impossible that such days or such confidences could be repeated, but this only irritated him the more. Nor could he turn to any newer friend with satisfaction. His future wife had never striven very hard to study his moods and tenses. There was nothing of the “ministering angel” about Julia, and her betrothed instinctively felt that to seek sympathy at her hands would be an absolute mistake.

She was not intentionally unkind nor much more than ordinarily selfish, but those gentle tender ways, those little acts and looks and touches which make the charm of many a woman, were not gifts which Miss Hawley numbered, or apparently cared to number, as her own.

It is the habit of many minds to ponder on little things rather than upon some large event which may have recently happened. It was so, to some extent, with Martindale. As he drove home to Blatherwick Park he was thinking less of the recent meeting and its abrupt termination than of the little graces which were wanting in the disposition of the woman who was soon to be his wife, and found himself drawing comparisons which he of all men had no right to draw;

and yet, he argued with himself, why had he not a right to think about Grace Summer? Surely the course she had taken since his promotion to riches and dignity was unnecessary and—unreasonable. The last word did not pass quite readily; he turned it over. Then the carriage drew up at his own door, and he dismissed his reflections with a short, half-angry sigh. The Major of course got out too, but George had anticipated that his future father-in-law would be driven straight home to The Cedars. However, the Colonel alighted.

"I can walk home," said he; "I want only one word with you, my dear fellow, before you turn in."

George led the way, with as good a grace as he could assume, to the library, and proceeded to warm his hands at the fire, without question.

Then, after a little beating about the bush, Colonel Hawkley explained himself—

There were, he said, two or three little matters which were pressing him rather disagreeably at the moment; and there were, also, certain extra demands arising in connection with the happy event which was soon to come to pass, and, in short, could Martindale oblige him with a little temporary loan—say a hundred or so?

George disregarded the "or so," which the Colonel had delicately introduced in his request, and wrote a cheque for £100 precisely.

"I find," said he, as the cheque changed hands, "that my income is less than I had at first supposed—probably that is a thing which I am bound to mention to you in the circumstances. I have written, fully explaining matters, to the lawyers."

Colonel Hawkley, however, declined to regard the announcement as being of a serious character.

"My dear fellow, a few hundreds, more or less, can't make much difference. You have enough I am sure to keep my girl in comfort, and something to spare, I dare say, to do a little good with amongst your fellow creatures."

Perhaps the Colonel was not quite clear as to the form of "good" which his future son-in-law was to bring about

with his spare cash, but it is to be feared that Martindale did not take it as an altogether disinterested remark. He made no reply, and accompanied Colonel Hawkley to the hall door, from which the latter departed humming cheerfully, with the cheque neatly folded in his waistcoat pocket. As George returned to his room, with the intention of having a quiet smoke for half-an-hour before going to bed, the Major peeped out of the dining-room.

"Are you coming in here?" he asked.

"No," was Martindale's brief reply.

"Then I will come to you just for two moments."

George could not very well say "no" to that also, although much inclined to do so. So he permitted the Major to follow him.

"I am afraid your wife will think we leave her alone a good deal," he said.

"Oh, she is gone to bed ages ago," replied the other; "a wonderful woman for sleep; but never mind about her. The fact is I am rather uncomfortably placed. There is an unpleasant affair on foot in town, and I ought to go up and stop it; of course I don't—."

"Go by all means," interrupted George, "don't let me stand in your way."

"My good sir," returned the Major, "I decline to leave you in the lurch; when I have undertaken a thing I like to go through with it. And, indeed, my presence in London, without the sum of forty or fifty pounds, would not be of much avail. If I could send up about that amount to-morrow, say by rail from Hexbury, it would, I believe, effectually put matters straight."

The Major repeated the latter words as he paced to and fro, with eyes apparently bent upon the carpet, but which were in reality taking furtive glances at his host to see how his observations were received.

George stirred the fire and said nothing.

"Yes, I think that would put matters straight," repeated Major Munns more slowly. "Perhaps," he added, with another side glance, "even thirty pounds might do it."

Still no response from his host.

"What do you say, Martindale," asked the other at length.

"I don't know that I can say anything," returned George, coolly. "I should think you had better run up to town, though: there is nothing like personal attendance to difficulties."

"Hang it, man! but about the thirty pounds?"

"I cannot lend that amount to you, if that is what you mean."

"In other words, you won't," retorted the Major sharply.

"Put it so, if you wish."

"Upon my word, Martindale, considering that I came down here expressly to attend to your interests, considering the—the family ties, and all that kind of thing, and that you are rolling in money, I think you might lend me a trumpery sum like that, at a pinch."

But George's heart was hardened against the would-be borrower. Had he applied before Colonel Hawkley he would have had no better chance; and the reminder of supposed sacrifices made on his (Martindale's) account, and of family ties, did not advance the petitioner's position.

George had not found that Major Munns, after the first day or two, afforded any real assistance to him; he had decidedly failed to fill up the "gaps," for which function he had professed himself so well adapted. When it came to the point he could never make even the shortest of speeches, and he had exhibited an inconvenient tendency to resort at various times to a small club in Hexbury to which Colonel Hawkley had introduced him.

For these reasons Martindale was quite willing that his visitor should return to his ordinary pursuits in town. So long as he would continue to lend him money he knew there would be no chance of his taking his departure. He determined, therefore, to make a stand. But the Major would not take "no" for an answer. It was really true that there was a disagreeable affair pending which could only be disposed of by a prompt payment. So he tried again; at first he was pathetic, then indignant, finally the real man came out—he got into a towering passion, whereupon George quietly

opened the door for him, and his visitor went out, flinging a very evil glance behind him.

Martindale went back and sat down before his solitary hearth with another sigh—of weariness and disgust this time ; while the Major betook himself to the dining room again, where he brewed himself several successive glasses of brandy and water, and tossed off the contents in a sort of fury.

CHAPTER XVII.

MAJOR MUNNS' DISCOVERY.

IT was considerably past midnight when Major Munns, with a flushed face, finished his last libation of spirits and water and left the dining-room. A tired servant, whose duty it was to see that all the lights were extinguished for the night, peered out from a remote passage at the sound of footsteps, and watched the Major as he went upstairs with somewhat unsteady steps.

"Late enough, and queer enough," muttered the man, as he crossed the hall to carry out his duties. But when he had raked out the fire in the dining-room and extinguished the candles and had come to the hall lamp, he discovered that a light was shining from under the door of Martindale's own particular *sanctum*. The domestic yawned despairingly.

"Bless us all ! what's up now, I wonder ?" he said, half-aloud this time.

Then he pulled himself together in a moment, for the door opened, and George looked out.

"You can go to bed," he said ; "I will put the lamp out. Lock up the door."

The man obeyed, and went his way with thankfulness.

In the meantime the Major had reached his apartments, which consisted of a large bedroom (formerly used by Matthew Martindale as a sitting-room, and being, in fact, the

chamber in which he had passed the latter years of his life, and in which he had died), and the room communicating with it, which had been his bedroom, but which was now furnished as a sort of *boudoir*, dedicated, for the time being, to the use of Mrs. Munns. A bedstead occupied the space in the first apartment which had been formerly filled by the big musical machine which had constituted the departed Martindale's hobby, and upon this bedstead at present reposed the form of Mrs. Munns wrapped in fitful slumbers.

She started and awoke as her husband entered, and endeavoured by the aid of the night-light, which was glimmering on a small table, to make out his condition of temper and otherwise.

"My dear, isn't it very late?" she ventured to inquire, in a half-awake tone.

"No, it's very early," growled the Major. "Where are the matches? What the devil do you always do with the matches?"

Mrs. Munns offered a half-apologetic disclaimer with reference to these useful articles, but her observations came indistinctly from beneath the bedclothes and did not appease the Major's irritation. He went stumbling hither and thither, muttering all the time, and presently came violently into collision with an old-fashioned piece of furniture, a sort of dressing-table and *escriatoire* combined. The collision must have affected a spring, for immediately a broad, shallow drawer flew out in the front, from a place where no drawer would have been suspected to exist.

"Hullo! this is a queer affair," cried Major Munns, rubbing his leg at the same time. His wife looked up; but discovering nothing of absorbing interest, fell back upon her pillow and was soon fast asleep.

The Major did not consume any further time in searching for matches, but succeeded in lighting the candles from his wife's night-light. Then he made a very careful examination of the contents of the drawer. They consisted of a few trifling curiosities, such as a man would pick up here and there in foreign countries; some memoranda, which referred to a variety of investments; and a couple of letters in sealed

and stamped envelopes, but which appeared never to have been despatched to their respective destinations. They were addressed in a peculiar, cramped handwriting—the one to a firm of wine merchants in London, the other (in a long, blue envelope) to Mr. Croft, the solicitor at Hexbury.

The Major read the addresses, turned over the letters, weighed them in his hand, pinched them to ascertain if possible what they contained, and was just as wise as he had been before.

Mrs. Munns had indulged in the luxury of a fire in her bedroom. It was nearly out now, but not quite. Her husband went over and poked the embers together, tossed on a few coals in a judicious manner, and soon had a cheerful little blaze, opposite which he sat down in an arm-chair, and again examined the missives from an external point of view.

He sat looking at them until the glow from the fire and the glow from the brandy-and-water betrayed him into a semi-dozing condition, and it was whilst in this state that it passed through his mind that he had heard that formerly that had been the room occupied by the late owner of Blatherwick Park.

"Why, it's the room in which he—in, in which it happened," he said to himself, coming back to full consciousness, but somehow not caring to speak of death in plain terms in that place and at that time.

He glanced at the addresses on the envelopes once more. He was quite satisfied now that they were in the handwriting of the late Matthew Martindale, and he was curious to know what were the contents, at least of one of them. The question presented itself, whether a man were guilty of any high crime or misdemeanour if, in such circumstances, he opened an envelope? The Major was much addicted to reading the police reports and the legal intelligence in the daily papers, but he did not recollect ever having read of a person being arraigned upon a charge of opening another man's letter, whether that other man happened to be dead or alive. It might not be exactly an honourable or a moral thing to do, but the Major cared little what might be charged against him *in foro conscientia*, so long as he managed to

avoid the meshes of the law of the land. Besides, who was to know anything about an envelope? It could not constitute a document of moment, and if the inner part were valuable, it would lose none of its importance by being deprived of its outer shell. With these reflections Major Munns drew one of the candles nearer. First he took the letter addressed to the wine merchants, and gradually succeeded in melting the wax, but even then the envelope stuck fast, and finally he resolved to let it do so for that night at any rate. Then he took up the other and tried the same process, but whether it were that he was nervous or shaky, he managed to scorch and blacken the whole face of the envelope. He drew it back with a subdued curse. It would never do to let it remain in that condition, and, gathering boldness, he slit the top of the enclosure and tossed the envelope upon the fire. The deed was done now. The secret was in his own hands, and it was too late to go back. With fingers that were not very steady he unfolded the paper which he had taken from the envelope, and scanned it hurriedly in the first place, then read it slowly to himself word by word.

He passed his hand doubtfully across his brow when he had finished, and regretted that he had taken so much brandy and water. He felt that he wanted a cool head to arrive at a right understanding of this matter and to know how to turn it to his own advantage. Nevertheless he had his wits sufficiently to enable him to realize that if this discovery were to be worked to his own personal profit he must act with promptitude — before George Martindale made Miss Hawkley his wife, before he should be returned as member for Hexbury.

He was so convinced of the desirability of losing no time, that he staggered to his feet with the idea of seeking Martindale's presence then and there.

"I will see if he won't lend me thirty pounds now," he muttered, as he went towards the door.

When he opened it and looked out, the lamp was still burning in the hall below, but the next moment it was put out and he caught a glimpse of George advancing up the

stairs, candle in hand. This was not what he had expected. He had supposed that he would go down and find his host still sitting over his papers in his study. The actual turn of things made him alter his mind. What he had to say could scarcely be effectively said upon the staircase by the light of a single candle, and between the hours of one and two o'clock in the morning. Moreover, now he came to think of it, he had not made up his mind *what* he should say. It was essential that he should have a programme. To go blundering suddenly *in media res* would be the very way to spoil his chances. Far better to sleep upon it and mature his plans by the light of another day. So the Major swiftly and silently closed his door ere Martindale could express any curiosity as to the lateness of his guest's movements.

George was weary in mind and body, yet little real repose seemed to come to him. For the rest of the night he tossed to and fro upon his bed, now listening to the dismal wind moaning in the trees outside, now falling into a grotesque dream in which he had a violent quarrel with his future wife, and immediately thereafter went down and told his wrongs to the House of Commons. The House, according to his dream, took the matter up strongly, and there was a fierce debate, in the course of which he found himself belaboured in a scathing speech by the leader of the Opposition. In the midst of this he awoke again, and turned once more with an impatient grunt.

Major Munns slept far more soundly than the master of the house, and his dreams were pleasanter. He dreamed that he was a rich man, that untold gold was his, and that, amongst other possessions, Blatherwick Park belonged to him. How all this came to pass the dream did not reveal.

When he awoke, the winter sun was shining into the room. Mrs. Munns had already risen, and this, with other circumstances convinced the Major that it was late. Nevertheless, he did not attempt to hasten his movements, but made a point of staying where he was until the carriage had come round to the front entrance, and he had heard Martindale driven off to Hexbury.

The Major then felt that the coast was clear, and got up

at once. Whilst he was sitting at his breakfast, Colonel Hawkley was announced.

"Good morning, Munns," said he; "I have a little business to do at Hexbury, and I looked in to see if any one is going to drive that way. Martindale has gone already, I hear."

"I am going to drive the dog-cart in," responded the Major. "Start in ten minutes time. Very happy to give you a lift." The Colonel accepted the offer, and enquired politely after Mrs. Munns (who was at that moment reading a novel by the fire in her own sitting room).

The dog-cart came round in due course, and the two gentlemen drove off. Colonel Hawkley was very talkative, but his companion was rather silent and thoughtful.

"It has been infernally annoying to me," complained the Colonel, "that I have not been able to keep horses of my own of late years. I have kept a pony carriage for my daughter, but the animal is always lame, or useless, for some reason or another."

"A man can't live comfortably in the country unless he has a well-filled stable," said the other, as if he had thousands a year.

"No," assented the Colonel; "I intend to give up The Cedars, and live in town after my daughter's marriage."

"No place in the world like London to live in," said Major Munns abstractedly.

"By-the-way, perhaps you will put me down at the Bank," said his companion.

The Major did so. "Shall I wait?" he asked.

"Well, no, that is not worth while. Will you lunch with me at the Club. Perhaps we may make up a table for whist, or at any rate we can have a quiet game of *ecarté* afterwards."

The Major readily accepted the invitation and drove away to the stables, while his friend went into the Bank to do his little business. This consisted of the simple process of cashing his future son-in-law's cheque.

The two gentlemen met at the club in due course. They had their luncheon and they had their quiet game of *ecarté*

afterwards. The luck was with the Major. When they rose up from the table after an hour or two, he was the winner of precisely thirty pounds. Thus by an irony of Fate, George Martindale's money found its way indirectly into the Major's pocket after all. Moreover, the indirect course was to some slight extent advantageous to the would-be borrower, for under present circumstances nobody could ask him to return the amount.

Colonel Hawley looked a little aggrieved as he put on his hat. He thought it rather hard that he should have lost so much money at one sitting. On the way home it was he who was silent and the Major who was talkative.

It was bitterly cold, and they both got down at the lodge-gates of the park—the one to restore the circulation of his blood by walking to The Cedars, and the other to effect the same object by walking up the avenue, whilst the groom drove on. The Major, however, had another object in alighting. He knew that he must inevitably meet George Martindale at the dinner-table, and he was anxious to have a short time of quietude beforehand to enable him to decide upon his line of conduct, which the occupations of the day had not yet allowed him to do.

The shadows of evening were already deepening beneath the trees as Gill, the lodge-keeper, shut the gates behind him. Major Munns walked slowly onward, with eyes bent thoughtfully upon the ground. He had not got many yards, when the sound of approaching footsteps made him look up. Another man, also, was pacing thoughtfully in the avenue. In the gloom the Major was not at first certain who it was; but after a few more paces he saw that it was Martindale himself.

(To be continued.)



MISSING LINKS.

IT is far too soon to pass any decided opinion about evolution. A Roman Catholic professor, indeed, has announced that the new theory is quite consistent with the past teaching of the infallible Church. That Church has probably learnt wisdom since the days when it imprisoned Galileo for maintaining a truth which it was afterwards forced to accept. "If evolution is true; if it is to turn out, after all, the law by which things have come to be what they are, it will never do for us to have begun by setting ourselves in violent opposition to it." That seems to be the feeling of the Roman Catholic teachers; therefore they are "hedging," as it is called by betting men, so as to save their Church's credit whichever way the controversy is settled.

High Churchmen, too, imitators of Rome in many things, seem not so angry with evolution as their Low Church brothers. One of them, we believe, declared in a Church review that it is not incompatible with the letter of Scripture—that just as Scripture language may be accommodated to geological truth, so it may be adapted to the evolution theory.

We, being neither High Church nor Romanist, decline, as yet, to say more than that evolution is a theory in support of which a number of facts have been and are being brought forward, and which, many good and thoughtful men believe, enhances the glory of the Creator instead of detracting therefrom—it being the work of higher wisdom to pre-arrange so that one thing shall follow as matter of course

from another than to be constantly interfering, whether by special acts of creation or otherwise.

All we shall do now is to state a few facts, the newest, we believe, bearing on the subject, which recent geological discoveries in Europe and America have brought to light.

Last year Mr. Huxley, in his "American Addresses," traced evolution in the case of the horse through every stage up to a five-toed creature with forty-four teeth, the "missing links" having been discovered by Professor Marsh in the *eocene* beds of the Western States. The series stand thus: 1. *Horse*, with one digit prolonged, its nail forming the solid hoof, and two other digits shrivelled up into merely rudimentary splint-like bones. 2. *Pliohippus* (nearer to a horse), in the *pliocene* beds—those wherein the majority, *pleion*, of the fossils are very near of kin to living forms. In this creature the two dwarfed digits are somewhat more developed, and the teeth are slightly different. 3. *Protohippus* (primal horse; Cuvier called it *hipparion*, horseling), with these digits prolonged into "dew claws." 4. *Anchitherium* (beast near, *i.e.* to a horse; *miohippus*, less a horse than the former, the American geologists call him), with the "dew claws" lengthening into toes. 5. *Mesohippus* (middle horse, midway between horse and his five-toed ancestor), with the rudiment of a fourth toe. 6. *Orohippus* (mountain horse—what terribly haphazard names they seem to be), in the *eocene* beds (those whose fossils show only a dawning of existent forms), with four toes on the front and three on the hind feet; and lastly, in the same beds, the five-toed creature aforesaid.

Here is a complete chain of development which does not suffer from the opinion of most geologists, because the later links have as yet been found only in America.

In the same way the *hesperornis* (western bird), lately found by Professor Marsh in the chalk beds of the Western States, is a link between bird and reptile—it has real teeth; as the *archaeopteryx* (ancient winged creature) of the Solenhofen slates is in another direction, for it has a jointed tail.

That links should be found between the rhinoceros and the pig will astonish no one, for the two have a certain

general resemblance, leading to more than one name for the beast whom we call by its Greek designation. And so it is found to be; the *hyotherium* (pig-wild beast) is a huge fossil pig. The *palaeochoirus* (ancient swine) is thoroughly piggish, but yet in structure of teeth and feet tending towards the rhinoceros. The *choiropotamus* (river swine), found in the gypsum beds of Montmartre, is almost exactly like the *acorotherium* (hornless beast), which itself is just a fossil hornless rhinoceros. In this way gaps get filled up in the series of developments as more strata get examined; and how few strata have as yet been completely examined. This hornless rhinoceros has four toes, the outer one being quite small; the horned rhinoceros has three and a rudimentary bone. In the *palaeotherium* (ancient wild beast), the three toes are lengthened and narrowed; and in the *anchitherium*, as before stated, the middle toe is the longer. In this way the rhinoceros and horse can be both traced up to the same ancestry, the form of the feet (say the evolutionists) having changed as the conditions of life were altered; on the one hand the broad, flat toes suited a dweller in marshland and river, and, on the other, the solid hoof was adapted for rapid motion over dry plains.

Nor is it only creatures as similar as pig and rhinoceros which can be traced to a common ancestry. The sheep and the hippopotamus are very unlike in all respects, yet, looking to their feet, we see a regular gradation of form in hippopotamus, pig, peccary, *hyomorches* (pig-calf), tragula, steinboch, sheep—all existing forms; and the same gradation exists in the corresponding fossils.

No two creatures are more unlike than the deer and the pig, or in general than ruminants and pachyderms (thick-skinned beasts), and though a glance at the pen in the British Museum containing the huge bullock-like antelopes of South Africa will dispel the notion that all of the deer kind are graceful creatures, it will hardly prepare us for the fact that the earliest ruminants had no horns (long after their earliest stages their horns were very small), and that at first they had incisors like the pachyderms. The teeth-differences are now very marked; the molars of pigs are

covered with flattened prominences cased in very hard enamel, and fit to crush the hard things which come in the way of an omnivorous feeder. The surface of a ruminant's molars presents an arrangement of sharp crescents forming a rasp for the grasp. Yet the back molars of peccaries, *palaiochirus*, and others, approximate to those of ruminants; while pig, *anthrocotherium* (coal beast), *hyopotamus* (river pig), *lophiomeryæ* (beasts with oblique thigh-bones), *anoplotherium* (defenceless beast), *dorcatherium* (gazelle-like beast), give a complete series from swine to ruminants. Elephants, again, are vegetarians, and have their molars covered with sharp ridges like those on the molars of ruminants, yet the mastodon, clearly of the elephant family, had molars with strongly-enamelled protuberances just like those of the pig. Moreover, Crauford and Falconer have found in India as complete a series of intermediaries between the two as that which Mr. Huxley has drawn out between the horse and his five-toed ancestor.

Between carnivora, also, unsuspected relationships are proved by the "testimony of the rocks." The *amplicyon* (sort of dog,) is a tribe between the bear and the dog. It was a plantigrade dog—walking, i.e., bear-like, on the flat of its feet, instead of digitigrade, treading on the points of its toes; its teeth, too, were like bears' teeth, for it was an omnivorous, not flesh-eating, creature.

The *hyenarctus* (hyena-bear), on the other hand, was more bear than dog, just as the *amplicyon* was more allied to the dog. Here is not yet indeed a complete series, but just a couple of links—

"Nature trying her 'prentice han',"

a poet expresses it; the creatures working up, says the evolutionist, to those forms which best fit their modes of life; even as, since man took the matter in hand, the greyhound and the turnspit and the racehorse and the big Flanders brewer's horse have become adapted, in shape and nature, each to its special needs. Thus the dog-bears and bear-dogs (for the hyena is a dog), or by whatever names the common ancestor is known, gradually split off in two directions, till some became the bears and others the dogs of the present

day. A bear and a dog are, no doubt, far more widely different than an Englishman and a Hindoo ; but the difference between these latter (both sprung, they tell us, from the same Aryan stock) may help us to understand the process whereby the wider difference between bear and dog came about, and to realise the truth that there is no impassable barrier between species, but that, in the far-off ages, these also melt into each other, even as what we, who see so little of the great drama of life, sharply distinguish as varieties constantly get modified before our very eyes.

Other links have been discovered between the carnivora : Greece has contributed not a few. Those quarries of Pentelicus, to which the Athenians went for marble for their statues, are now a great hunting-ground for the geologist ; the Glen of Pickermi, above all, has proved rich in unsuspected treasures. Here, amongst other things, M. du Harlay discovered three distinct "species" (if you will use the old name) of *ictitherium* (weasel-beast), forming unmistakeable links between the civet and the hyena. Between cats, again, and martens (now so unlike each other, though the Greeks had no domestic cat, but seem to have used the marten instead) there have been found fossil intermediate forms ; and also—marvel of marvels!—between the monkey tribe and those pachyderms of which the pig is our most familiar representative. We have long heard of the pig-faced lady, and "Punch" has sometimes given his Irishmen a quasi-porcine expression, out of consideration, doubtless, for the "gentleman that pays the rint" ; but it was reserved for the geologists of yesterday to show that the *cebochoirus anceps* (dubious pig-monkey) has close affinities both with the pig and also with the ape—at any rate with the lemur class of ape.

We must not think of these creatures as monstrosities, such as were dreamt of in the old-world legends, and of which the last trace remains in the early maps of Africa and travels like those of Sir John Mandeville (whose quaint tomb I hope they have taken care of in restoring St. Alban's Abbey). "Here dwell the gryphons," "Here the anthropophagi," "Here is the country of the phœnix," and so on, say

the maps ; and Mandeville gives woodcuts of the marvels—men with only one foot, but that so big that they can use it as a sun-shade when they sit down to rest in the desert ; men with deer's heads, and lions with eagles' heads. How fond the poets are of describing such creatures ! Listen to Shelley, in his "Witch of Atlas" :—

"Pigmies and Polyphemes by many a name,
Centaurs and Satyrs, and such shapes as haunt
Wet clefts, and lumps neither alive nor dead,
Dog-headed, bosom-eyed, and bird-footed."

There never have been monstrosities in nature, though the pictures which the earlier geologists delighted to draw, would make us think so. I remember, *duria antiquior* (the hard old times), a lithograph that dear old Dean Buckland used to give to those who attended his Oxford geology class. What lectures those were, by the way—to see the old Dean tuck his arms behind him, lifting his gown up into a sort of cock's tail, and walk across the lecture-room foot before foot as a fowl walks, explaining thereby the fact that the big foot prints on the Massachusetts sandstone flags are in single lines, and not in truth as are the tracks of men and apes, and bears, and that, therefore, the creature who made them was a bird (*magalornis*, big bird he has since been called). But his *duria* rather exaggerated the quaint shapes of the

"Dragons of the prime,
Which tear each other in the slime."

It is hard, no doubt, to imagine any beauty in a bird with bat's wings, and a double row of teeth, and a jointed tail ; yet, I will not believe but that there was more comeliness than we imagine in those ages during which things were getting to be shipshape on this our earth.

We can find out a great deal about these primeval beasts. Cuvier, they say, and our own Owen could, from one bone, construct the whole skeleton of an extinct animal. But from this constructive power it does not necessarily follow that their pictures of them were exactly right. If we had

never seen a horse, our attempt to realise it from never such a complete skeleton, would probably be far more like the wooden pony of a child's go-cart, with its hogged mane and clumsy legs than like a thorough-bred, or even a decent hack. So I believe it to be with a good many of the *theriums* that now look so awkward and monster-like in our geology books.

We must, then, not talk about evolution, but try to find out more links; there are plenty still missing, and it is wonderful how soon artizans and even business men may get such a knowledge of comparative anatomy as not indeed to emulate Cuvier, but to know a bone when they find it, whether in the drift or imbedded in some earlier stratum. Look at Edward, the Scotch naturalist; and think of that City clerk who found time to make moth and butterfly hunts in Epping Forest, and whom the British Museum folks honoured as knowing more of entomology than four-fifths of its professors. Any one who goes for a week's holiday into a *fossil-bearing* country may find some precious link if only he knows what to look for.

Geology teaches us that the number of species has been infinite, that many have died out, and that those which have survived have only in comparatively recent times got their distinctive forms. No future geologist will think, as Cuvier did, that species are immutable and are the only real division between creatures, genera and families being nothing more than arbitrary classifications. Later geologists have asserted, on the other hand, that family and genus are as real distinctions as species; and the dispute has been as sharp as that between the two schools of logic, the nominalists and realists, in the Middle Ages, with which dispute, by the way, it has a good deal in common. But now that we find species merging into each other, or the missing links get discovered, we feel that genus is a more real ground of distinction than species, and family than genus; until some of our scientists think they can look back to a primal unit out of which every form, no matter how diverse now, has developed. Much is as yet guesswork, for we human beings have come last into the world, and therefore could not

watch the old organic changes ; but still, much is certain, unless, indeed, we determine to argue like the stubborn old clergyman who, when he was pushed hard about the six days of creation, said, " Well, after all, who knows that your fossils ever lived ? Why shouldn't God have made them as they are, and buried them where you find them, in order that men might exercise their wits and discover their own shallowness ? " Reasoning like that puts a stop to all discussion ; but, leaving such mere obstructives stranded on the beach, let us remark that the anatomy of a horse's leg, with its rudimentary toes shrunk up above the fetlock, is incomprehensible unless the creature from which the horse is developed once had toes that it could use. Once believe that Nature makes nothing in vain, and these organs—now useless, like the tail-bones of the human creature—point to a time of transition. A very very long time it must have been ; and that is how we, whose observing time has been so short (for really scientific observation is a very modern affair), have not been able to trace any transitions, any melting of species into species, in the world as it is. Types do not change so long as the circumstances in which they live remain the same. Several species of shells have lived on unaltered from the days when our limestones were a-making, and the little *globigerinæ* (flinty atomies that lived in the chalk-sea) are precisely the same as those found in the mud which was brought up from the ocean depths during the cruise of the *Challenger*. So, in Egypt, geologists have been sometimes posed by the objection, " Here we have records and actual pictures and mummies and sculptures for five thousand years (some say for several thousand more), and yet, from the first, Egyptian cats are cats, and not half cat half weasel ; and horses horses, without the slightest tendency towards either pig or rhinoceros." The answer is, the conditions of life in the Nile valley have been from earliest times the same. That is how there so soon began to be a settled kingdom there. Had a colony of Egyptian cats been transported five thousand years ago to an uninhabited land, where they would have been tempted to find shelter by burrowing in dry banks, they might have grown by this time

into something very like weasels. We do find changes, though not specific changes, in very short periods. In Cyprus, for instance (where nearly all the plants, grass included, assume, in that dry air, a hard, leathery character), the dogs have long toes : they have got them by the long-continued habit of treading gingerly over the unpleasant herbage, so different from our soft turf or smooth roads. So, again, a breed of dogs in the Pyrenees has six toes on the hind feet, and differs widely in the shape of its teeth from dogs in general. So, too (to look at home), the Dorking hen, whose extra claw shows how even an accident may easily become permanent.

On the whole, then, these newly-found links show that there has been a gradual approximation to existing forms ; that a creature partaking of the nature of two of our present animals got modified in two directions, giving rise to from existing species—as when some of our dog-bears moved on till they became wholly dogs, while others of them gradually dropped the dog and became all bear. Every now and then there were anomalies, just as in the purest "breeds" nowadays sometimes an ill-“bred” lamb or calf—a reversion to some less-improved ancestor—crops up ; even the horse reverting sometimes to the *hipparion* type, going back, i.e., to a greater development of the two useless toes.

Thus, in the latest tertiary beds, while animals in general were growing like what they are now—*pleiocene* instead of *mio-* and *eocene*—of a good many of them there was an exaggerated type, as, for instance, the *elephans primigenius* and the *rhinoceros tichorhinus*.

In this tertiary epoch, by the way, trees and invertebrates were nearly all of existing genera : with those classes of the animal kingdom *generic* changes are over. Fish, too, had got to their full perfection, and reptiles had passed their prime—which was when the lias beds were being deposited—in the days of the *ichthyosaurus* (fish-lizard) and all the other monster saurians (reptile-like beasts). The mammalia came later to completeness, possibly (as a French geologist suggests) because they had not a fair chance until the huge reptiles of the secondary age—Tennyson’s “dragons of the

prime"—with their thick, and often armour-plated skins, were destroyed.

It is, therefore, to the tertiary age that the eyes of geologists are just now most anxiously directed. In that age the mammalia were developed through a seemingly vast multitude of successive species; and here, if anywhere, the yet missing links will be found. This makes places like Pikermi so interesting, for tertiary beds were being formed in Southern Europe while the north-west of the continent was in great part covered with ice. When Turkey in Europe is properly opened up to civilisation, we shall find more and perhaps yet richer Pikermis.

So much by way of a hint in what strata the searcher for "links" must look. One fact will astonish him—the earliest warm-blooded animals seem to have been all *marsupials* (pouch-wearers), such as the opossum, kangaroo, and a few more, mostly Australian. To understand the difference, we must talk just a few words of anatomy. All mammalia are either marsupial or placenary. In the former the allantoid (sausage-shaped) membrane of the womb is only rudimentary; there is, therefore, no placenta, and therefore, too, the young are born while only imperfectly developed, just as if the marsupial was but one stage in advance of the *ornithorhyncus*, that strange Australian otter which actually lays eggs. After birth the young often take refuge in the pouch, and so the marsupials, being able to hide and carry off their young, may have had a better chance than the rest against the "primeval dragons." Anyhow, they were the earliest mammals. At Dean Buckland's lectures aforesaid, one was sure to hear of a little marsupial rodent—I think the earliest of English mammals—which was discovered by the Dean himself in the Oxfordshire oolite at Stonesfield. Just when species multiply, and the approximations to existing forms—*i.e.* the "links"—begin to be traceable, the marsupials mostly disappear. A placenary mammal varies still more than a marsupial from the original egg-laying plan. In it the allantoid membrane envelopes the unborn young or foetus, and is stretched into an extended piece called a placenta (flat cake), which joins the foetus closely to the

mother, and keeps them joined till the young creature is completely developed.

This is assumed to be a more perfect arrangement than the marsupial, which latter is now mainly confined to that old-fashioned Australian world, which seems to have stood still while other lands have been progressing. Elsewhere the marsupials have well nigh disappeared, but they did not disappear all at once. Here, as in other things, there was slow gradation; the *hyenodon* (beast with hyæna-like teeth), *pterodon* (wing-tooth), and other placental carnivora, have their molar teeth just like those of the marsupials; our friend the *arctocyon* (dog-bear) has a brain of the marsupial type. Even when the pouch was lost, some of the characteristics of the pouch-bearers persisted.

Everywhere gradation, link after link; our present varied fauna all sprung from a few *pachyderms* (for nearly all the beasts of the tertiary beds were thick skinned, *i.e.* of the pig kind), in which may be dimly traced some of the features that afterwards distinguished each various species. Pig, tapir, elephant, rhinoceros, hippopotamus, horse—they are all as distinct as possible, “different species, marked off from one another by nature’s law,” say the scientists of the old school. Yet, there are found to have existed *creatures intermediate* which were neither pig, nor elephant, nor anything that now is, but which were in some one or more points like every one of them, and from which, by development in different directions, creatures as unlike each other even as the pig and the horse may gradually have been evolved.

“May have been,” we say; for, as I remarked at the beginning, we don’t mean to dogmatise either on one side or the other. The thing is to collect and arrange facts, and how wonderful is the rate at which this is being done; what a leap the world of science has made within the last thirty years, or rather, what a succession of leaps, each longer, and taking shorter time than that before it. Get facts; and be sure that evolution, if it is at last proved true, need not lower our idea of God. Creation is an easy word to use; but it is hard, nay impossible, for a man with only man’s

faculties to fully understand what the word means. Evolution seems to approve itself more readily to our limited understanding. We can imagine a developing power implanted at the beginning, working one form up into another, and so on; but even this is only setting the difficulty one stage further back. How the beginning came about we shall never know, even though we should discover all the missing links between the first elementary life-cell and the perfect man.

REV. H. STUART FAGAN.

PENSEZ À MOI.

IN sweet spring time when first the primrose blows;
In summer's sunny days, 'midst perfume of the rose;
In autumn's changes, and in winter's snows—

Pensez à moi.

When roseate hues of morn first gild the skies;
When mid-day's glorious sun doth light thy gladsome eyes;
When twilight's deep'ning shadows fall and rise—

Pensez à moi.

When pleasure's woven round thy fairy form;
When friends forsake thee and thou stand'st forlorn;
When griefs oppress thee and thou feel'st their thorn—

Pensez à moi.

If other forms should clasp thee to their heart;
If other lips to thee sweet vows impart;
In life, in death, together or apart—

Pensez à moi.

W. J. MORGAN.



A National and a Rational Holiday.

IT is not agreeable to be awakened by cannon. For a heavy pair of fists to hammer at your door at daybreak is bad enough, but to be suddenly carried by the explosion of a battery clean out of the happy company of a smiling virgin of dreamland into the anything but pleasant presence of the fact that it is getting up time is, well—annoying, to say the least. If there is one thing an Englishman enjoys, it is lying abed in the morning. Now, don't you, my friend, pretend you do not like it. You will not only not convince me, but I shall write you down a hypocrite besides.

“ ‘God bless the man who first invented sleep,’
So Sancho Panza said, and so say I,
And also bless him that he did not keep
His blest invention to himself, nor try
To make it, as the lucky fellow might,
A close monopoly by patent right.

“ ‘God bless the man who first invented sleep’
(I really can’t avoid the iteration),
But blast the man with curses loud and deep,
Whate’er the rascal’s name, or age, or station,
Who first invented, and went round advertising,
That artificial cut off—early rising.”

To turn over and half awake, half asleep, take a little trip to fancy land, is a pleasure that a man must be little better than a piece of machinery who cannot enjoy. But there can

be no turning over this morning. The volley that starts me from my springing couch wakes all Paris into life and activity. To-day Paris is going to out-do herself. To-day the French Republic is to have a time of great rejoicing. She is going to take the hand of each stranger that has come within her frontier, and especially within the fortifications of the glorious capital, and shake it till each stranger's heart beats with hers to a tune of frantic joy. Then she will sing the *Marseillaise*, and in memory of poor Rouget d'Isle who, this very day so many years ago, was played to his death with his own music, will shout the chorus till she is blue in the face, then she will dance the can-can in the lime-light, and wind up the day by standing on her head amid a shower of fireworks.

Then she go will to bed and be up to-morrow, and go about her daily work as if nothing had happened, except perhaps feeling a little sensation of curiosity to know what her guests thought of her performance.

This is the programme I see before me as I dress. Only one fear I have, and that is for the weather. Last night was a taste of the Deluge. Old Noah, I know, never saw such a downpour as Paris was treated to on the eve of the great *fête* of June 30th, 1878. I was out without any umbrella. One generally is when it rains in earnest. The consequence was, that before I could get shelter I was wet to the skin, and so I went through it all, and reached home somewhat in the condition of a drowned rat. However, I did not sleep any the worse. With mingled hopes and fears I peep forth this morning. All trace of the storm has vanished, and there is the prospect of a fine, cool day. The sounds of happy voices come from the street. Some children are carrying home aprons full of flowers to finish the decoration of their homes. All the bells at the Exhibition are in full swing.

Soon after eight I find myself at Porte Rapp. On my way I have observed many bare arms, and shirt-sleeves at windows, where honest bourgeois have been busy fastening flags and lanterns, or giving the finishing touches to their decoration.

The price of *entrée* to the Exhibition to-day has been reduced to twenty-five centimes, to be paid at the doors. The authorities are not going to repeat the mistake they made on Whit-Monday, or Monday of the Pentecost as they call it in France, when 15,000 people were unable to get into the Exhibition. You have to procure a ticket at the neighbouring shops or kiosques, and on that day every one had sold out, and tickets could not be had for love or money. The ticket arrangement has few advantages and many objections. It is, however, illustrative of the French Administration. It is *not* one of the things they do better in France. Four of the ticket collectors for some time found it a source of profit. When you present your ticket at the first, it is punched and handed back to you, and you deliver it at the next. The idea suggested itself to one of the men only to pretend to punch some of the tickets, which he and his companions could re-sell. This little game went on at one of the gates for some time, till they became overbold, and offered the tickets to a shopkeeper, who informed the authorities, and the four collectors next morning were not at their places, and their friends are inquiring for them in vain. There had been a talk of throwing the doors open to the public to-day free, but the exhibitors feared for the safety of their cases. Already a goodly crowd has collected in the gardens between the Champ de Mars Palace and the river. At nine o'clock come all the Ministers and Under-Secretaries of State and M. Krantz. M. Teisserenc de Bort and M. Mercère make speeches full of democratic sentiments, the signal is given, Clesinger's statue of the Republic on the terrace, which ought to have been ready by the opening day, is unveiled, the band strikes up the *Marseillaise*, and the people cheer and shout.

From the Champ de Mars I wend my way towards the centre of Paris. What a sight! For a fortnight fifty thousand hands have been hard at work making tricolor flags for to-day, and from every window and upon every vehicle the results of their labours flutter in the breeze—big flag, little flag, tiny flag, and oriflamme. I pass under bridges of flags, arches of flags, and down avenues of flags. Ever-

greens and flowers, too, play a prominent part ; and every now and then I come upon a grand triumphal arch. The Place de la Concorde is one mass of opal globes ; the entrance to the Madeleine is being hung with crimson velvet ; the principal boulevards present a marvellous sight. Every shop is closed, every tree is connected with a garland of Chinese lanterns, at every corner is raised a Venetian mast, at every window are flags and Venetian lamps. The road and pavements are thronged with joyful people. The national colours are everywhere—ribbons, feathers, rosettes, bows, and buttonholes, all are tricolor. Bouquets of red, white, and blue flowers are carried by children, many of whom wear an entire dress of the same colours. The flower-girls are selling a very pretty and effective buttonhole—a corncockle, a red and a white carnation ; in some cases, a poppy takes the place of the red carnation. After breakfast I walk down to the Palais Royal. The gardens are heavy with decorations ; the fountain has disappeared, and in the centre of the basin has been erected a pavilion, where a military concert is to be given. At the Tuilleries there will, however, be the best concert ; and there I go. Everywhere on my way I encounter crowds of holiday-seekers, and in the gardens there are already several thousand people. I fetch a chair, and get a good place. Every minute the crowd increases. By three o'clock the orchestra of two hundred performers and the owners of five hundred voices are in their places upon the large tribune that has been erected. I stand upon my chair and look around. As far as I can see are forms and faces, and everywhere the national colours. Labourers in blue are busy hanging the little glass lamps for to-night's illuminations. The fountain is stopped. M. Colonne taps the desk before him, and the orchestra strikes up the overture from "Zampa." Every one of the vast crowd is attention. Then follows "Noble France" and Mendelssohn's "Vinedresser's Chorus."

By-and-bye the mighty audience is roused to enthusiasm by Victor Hugo's stirring chant, "Gloire à la France," to Bazin's music. M. Bazin himself wields the *bâton*, and the piece has to be gone through again after thundering

applause.* Then we have several grand musical treats, including Weber's "Invitation to Waltz," and the overture to "William Tell," and the programme is brought to an end by the new National Anthem, "Vive la France," by Dersuledge, to which Gounod has put music—for this, the public has been anxiously waiting, and during its progress it is criticised on all sides. From the back, some one cries, "La Marseillaise," and the cry is echoed all around, and at the end the whole 60,000 listeners seem to repeat the cry with one voice. M. Colonne gives the sign to his performers. It is enough for them, and in a moment the air resounds with Rouget d'Isle's stirring strains. The words are in every tongue as the vast concourse disperses. Gounod's music is very attractive, and well suited to a national song. It bears, too, some resemblance to its more popular rival, but will never take so much with the public, who will ever hold "La Marseillaise" the song of the Republic. It is rather a queer hymn to sing on a festival peace, but the French have no animosity as they shout its chorus to-day.

Towards the Bois de Boulogne the feet of the great crowd are now directed. On the way I call at a restaurant to get some dinner. The waiter smiles at my request, and says when I sit down—

"Excuse me, sir, that table is engaged."

"Indeed; I will have the next then."

"That is engaged too, sir; they were all taken this morning at fifty francs a piece."

I try several other places without success. I am getting desperately hungry. At last I find a cremerie where I can get some fruit. Every baker has sold out and shut up shop, so with this for the present I must be content. It is getting dark, but darkness is to have no power to-night. Light springs upon light all around. The borders of the lakes are on fire; half-a-million coloured lights float on their surfaces. One hundred thousand lighted balloons illuminate the trees. I am dazzled by the sight and squeezed by the crowd. I

* I regret to have to state that M. Bazin died suddenly within a week of his oration at the Tuilleries on this occasion.

turn towards Paris. It is rather difficult to force my way back. All vehicular traffic is stopped, and the crowd, Bois bound, has possession of the road. At last I get to the Arc de Triomphe, where the sun is eclipsed by the electric light. Looking towards Paris, one sees a sight never before witnessed. Only Parisians or those who knew the grandest *fêtes* under the Empire can have any conception of the spectacle. On the Arc are Marshal Macmahon and the Shah, looking on Paris enveloped in fire. Two continuous streams of light, each three miles long, stretch down to the Place de la Concorde, where every available point is connected with festoons of luminous globes. For that distance you can see nothing but a surging sea of human forms. You hear the murmur of a multitude and the notes of song. Every now and then a squib rises in the air from the hand of some mischievous boy, or a cracker startles a party of sober foreigners. In the distance you can see the 35,000 lights of the Tuilleries Gardens and the electric lamps at the Orangery Concert. Behind, clear and distinct, stand, as a shameful record of wickedness, the ruins of the Imperial Palace. What is that noise? Music. Look, here they come. Twenty military bands, with 500 drummers and 500 trumpeters, head a torchlight procession back from the lakes. It must be late. I fall in with the crowd and march with them till I turn off towards home. Everywhere are illuminations. The *fête* has been universal. What must it have cost? The Chamber voted 500,000 francs and the Municipality 300,000 francs, while private subscriptions have increased the amount to considerably above a million.

I am very tired in body, but my mind is full of thoughts as I walk along. It is Sunday. I do not think, however, these Parisians have grievously sinned. They have had a day of pure pleasure and enjoyment, and their consciences are easy. Their Sunday's pursuits are, at any rate, honest. There is something very elevating about the music which they revel in. I do not think in London 60,000 people would flock to Hyde Park to an *al fresco* concert when the public-houses were open; at any rate, not the class of people that went to-day to the Tuilleries. And how they enjoyed

the music. It was a study to watch their faces. How orderly, too, is a French crowd; no pushing, no hustling, no insolence. I did not see a single case of drunkenness. This morning about 50,000 poor families each received two francs. Hear that, charity mongers, salvation mongers, and sheep-skin wolves! A hundred thousand francs were not spent in Bibles or sent to the Sandwich Islands, but given on application to the deserving poor. Over a thousand prisoners were released. Oh! what a day of rejoicing it has been. In the middle of September there is to be a four days' *jête*, grander than to-day's. Ah, France, you know how to keep holiday! May you ever be able to do so as thoroughly and as heartily as you have done to-day, and England will ever join in your cry of "Vive la Republique."

HORACE L. NICHOLSON.

THE ROARING FORGE.

WHEN whirling flakes of pallid snow
Were borne on breezes cold and keen,
The roaring forge's ruddy glow
Streamed forth upon the wintry scene.
A measure ringing clear and glad
The blacksmith's clinking hammer had.

Though dark the forge's roof and dim,
Its honest hearth was dear to me;
Though swart the master's face and grim,
He did his duty manfully.
And thus a measure clear and glad
The blacksmith's clinking hammer had.

FRANCIS H. HEMERY.



THE FOREST OF MELFORD.

A Story of the Day in which we Live.

By A. J. DUFFIELD.

One of the Authors of "Masston; a Story of these Modern Days," &c., &c.

CHAPTER XVII.

"Society is a republic. When the individual strives to rise, the community presses him back by ridicule and calumny. One is not to be better or cleverer than the rest; and so he who, by the inflexible force of genius, towers above the standard of commonplace, meets the ostracism of society, which persecutes him with such pitiless mockery and slander that at length he has to withdraw to the solitude of his thoughts. Yes; society is in its essence republican. Everything princely is hateful to it, whether spiritual or material. The laurel of a great poet is just as mortifying to it as the purple of a great king."

HEINRICH HEINE, on "*Cervantes and the Don Quixote.*"

WHY it is that this bitter German Jew, who transformed himself into a French Christian, should more than once take the lead in a chapter of our history of Mulberry, can only be explained by a reference to Brydges on Irritants. As, to live in Mulberry with any peace, it was necessary to conform to Mulberry ways; and to mix much with Mulberry men involved thinking Mulberry thoughts and uttering them in Mulberry speech; and silence in Mulberry became the mother of many maladies, and it

became necessary to talk and gabble in order to escape the suspicion of being a person of superior quality to themselves; so, to write a history of Mulberry or any of its people, however brief, recourse must now and then be had to an agent warranted to produce abnormal sensations, and such an agent is Heinrich Heine.

Stephen Bond was hated in Mulberry because, on a particular occasion, he refused to sell his land, or to associate with what were called its merchants or the Mulberry money-mongers; because he hated noise and the shallow babble of men who could not afford, or for other reasons, were unable to indulge in the luxury of ideas, they hated him also for that; and if twelve jurymen of Mulberry should ever be called upon to decide in a court of justice a suit which they do not and cannot understand, in which Stephen is defendant, they will give a verdict against him, for no other reason than that both he and his case are beyond their comprehensions. Not that they were incapable of comprehension; but to comprehend Stephen and his case would involve taking so much pains, and above all being true to themselves.

Arthur Quicksett, in like manner, began to excite the suspicions of Mulberry and its fathers. He was talked of disparagingly by some of the people whom he met; and others who invited him to their houses were among those who most ridiculed him behind his back. The foremost among this rabble was Tom Strawless, and his chief councillor was his mother.

"This spy of a Quicksteps is undermining thee feyther," she said to her beloved one day, and it is obvious that her husband must have instructed her to play the part she now began to take.

"How undermining?" enquired Tom.

"He's bin and persuaded old Peter Chetwon not to sell, and if he can, he'll persuade Harriet Newton to drop thee altogether, if thee dustner mind thee eye. Eh, lad, thee feyther's in a pretty stew about it, I can tell thee."

Tom Strawless considered that if there was one thing in life which was his bounden duty to perform, it was his duty to his father; and as this consideration was always asso-

ciated in Tom's mind with breaking somebody's nose, or doing other deeds of violence, it used to cost him not a little anxiety. He at once resolved on breaking Quicksett's nose, and told his mother so.

"That'll do no good," said the good-natured mother. "Doesn't Pewster," she continued, "know Sir Thomas?"

"Why, Pewster's a relation of his," replied her offspring.

"Well, then, thou must get laad Pewster to tell Sir Thomas about this Quicksteps, and get him to manage his being got out of the way by the Government folk. That's the way to do it."

Sir Thomas Coppersmith was one of the members of Parliament for Mulberry, and supposed to have great influence in the innermost of Government circles.

Young Strawless did not much fancy this intrigue of his mother—if anything, it was a little above his capacity; but he promised to have a talk with Pewster on the subject, and to see what could be done. It is true, thought he, that Pewster had once praised Quicksett's riding, but that might not make much difference. He still thought, however, that breaking Quicksett's nose much the better plan for getting rid of him. He was not greatly moved by his mother's allusion to Harriet Newton, for the youth had discerned for himself that Quicksett was now much more taken up with the London girl, as he called Estrid, than with Harriet, and told his mother that this was so.

"I tell thee it's nowt t' sort," she said; "that snipe Mackworth is ta'en up wi' her, and he mak's no bones about it, nor she neyther."

This wretched talk about Quicksett was not confined to the house of Strawless, for as these people began to set free the venom of their tongues, it spread as lightly and as swift as the detached down of the thistle, which floats on the air or finds its pernicious way on to cultivated grounds and settles in the soil where grow the choicest flowers.

Ethel Hillen heard much of this idle gossip, and she used it for her own playful purposes. Nor was she sorry to listen to much of it, for it brought the man whom she admired nearer to her own level and within her own reach.

"Mr. Quicksett is making a great impression, it appears," said Ethel to Estrid, as these two were strolling quietly about Spencer Grove the morning after the Paynim and Palatinate affair.

To this Estrid made no answer, and Ethel, supposing that the subject was not distasteful to her friend, continued it with many variations; but either the fisher was unskilful, the hour unpropitious, the lure not of the right colour, or, what is more likely, the fish was enjoying that calm indifference to temptation which nothing could disturb. One thing is certain, Estrid did not respond by look or word to Ethel's use of Quicksett's name. And yet she listened with a greedy ear, and to nothing with so much delight as to what was said that he was going to do. She smiled when Ethel, in her romantic fashion, began by supposing that if Mr. Quicksett did succeed in finding out which were the College lands in Melford Forest, no doubt a number of dear, delightful Oxford men would come to Melford, and "we shall see them in their black and red gowns and tasselled mortar-boards reclining under trees and reading books, and asking simple passers-by to come and listen to some wondrous tale which they will translate for them from the Arabic or Italian."

"You would not have them always reading or reclining under trees," said Estrid, merely for the sake of finding a little amusement for Ethel, who was fond of starting light imaginings.

"No," said Ethel, mighty well pleased that Estrid had spoken at last on the subject of men, and she put her arm round Estrid's waist as if she had been one of the much-canvassed sex.

"How Mr. Mackworth must love you?" continued Ethel, who, whatever may be thought of her shallow nature, was now and again a very useful irritant, and without in the least knowing it, she was of great use to Estrid at this moment. The hideous faces she had encountered in Cupid's Alley persisted in coming into her mind, as the stench of contagion will come to the nose long after the polluted spot has been passed where lay a festering human corpse.

"He is kind beyond expression. How he must have loved

you when you were ill in Arran ?" replied Estrid, regarding Ethel with a deprecating smile.

" He ' never told his love, but let concealment, like a worm i' the bud, feed on his pallid cheek,'" said Ethel, whose irreverence sometimes took a very daring flight.

" He made it known to me plain enough," said Estrid, determined to rally this frivolous girl upon her vanities.

" Then make it known to me, for I am dying to hear a tale of love," said Ethel, bending her neck sideways, and throwing up her eyes beseechingly at Estrid, as a parrot might at a doubtful object of temptation.

" Surely you know that Mr. Mackworth, when at Arran, ran in all directions for you. He gave up much of his holiday to be your servant ; and when, on one occasion, you cried for an orange, he went more than fifty miles to bring you one."

This was not what Ethel expected ; but she kept her ground, and answered—

" He saw you, with his spiritual mind, lying in your room at the Paynim Hotel. As we drove up there together I watched his eyes all the way, and they were steadily fixed on you, and he saw you, although you were invisible to everybody else."

As Mackworth had already explained that transaction on rational principles to Estrid she was not imposed upon by Ethel's account of it, so she continued—

" I heard him once most eloquently describe to me your poetical mind, praise unsparingly your uncommon wit, and declare that he thought you the most beautiful girl he had ever seen."

" Or Love but played with gracious lies,
Because he felt so fixed in truth,"

said Ethel ; and she added, " I never knew till now how that character of the bard was played."

For Ethel at times had flashes of a sense superior to that which gave ordinary guidance to her speech.

Not finding to her satisfaction that which she had sought for in Estrid, Ethel broke off the subject, to begin another which the adventures of the previous day had suggested to

her. She ran to her father's room, and brought thence a portly little folio, having red edges and full calf sides, richly stained and gilded.

"Listen, dear," she began; "I want you to tell me if you think we may adopt this which I am going to read as a belief of our own?—

"' You remember that I have often told you there are Beings of a superior rank to Mankind which frequently visit the habitations of Men, in order to call them from some wrong Pursuits in which they are actually engaged, or divert them from Methods which will lead them into Errors for the future. He that will carefully reflect upon the Occurrences of his Life will find he has been sometimes extricated out of Difficulties, and received Favours when he never could have expected such Benefits: as well as met with cross Events from some unseen Hand which have disappointed his best laid Designs. Such Accidents arrive from the Interventions of Aerial Beings, as they are benevolent or hurtful to the Nature of Man, and attend his Steps in the Tracts of Ambition, of Business, and of Pleasure.'

"There," said Ethel, "unriddle me that!"

"That," answered Estrid, "I suppose is written by Addison."

"No, it is not," said Ethel, with mock dogmatism; "but tell me, why do you suppose it to be by Addison?"

"It is suggestive of his delightful humour, who was the first to restore to English literature the expression of a heavenly countenance," said Estrid, who was, with Ethel, walking with her hands behind her back round the lawn.

Finding that Ethel had stopped in her walk, Estrid turned to see what had become of her, and she saw her sitting bolt upright on the grass, her face drawn into theatrical gravity, and her blue eyes wider open than ever.

"My darling Hypatia," Ethel began, in a voice smothered with laughter, "I consider the fineness of that wisdom to be incompatible with female happiness in general, and most certainly with matrimony in particular."

But for Ethel's inimitable acting, Estrid would long ago have grown weary of what some would not fail to call her barefaced vulgarities; but she much liked the comical play

which she threw into her commonplace talk, as well as the talk which was at times painful for that it was much overloaded with liberties taken with good taste and perfect freedom ; and it is but too likely that the somewhat solitary life which Estrid led at home gave to her mind a formal stamp and to her speech what was a show of affectation, but which, while Ethel knew it to be the free and spontaneous utterance of a sweet and thoughtful nature, yet she allowed Estrid's remarks to overwhelm her and to produce an effect that was not designed.

Estrid stood like one who was no more ashamed to be able to express herself intelligibly than she was ashamed to wear a beautiful dress.

" I say it is not Addison," continued Ethel, trying, if possible, to exasperate Estrid to more talk.

" We will ask your father," she answered.

" My father has given away much of his knowlengle to me, and with it this ! " exclaimed the tragedy queen, rising. " It was Sir Richard Steele who wrote those charming words. This is the first volume of the ' Tatler,' and Addison did not begin to write in that tri-weekly penny paper until the second volume began." And Ethel put on the appearance of a lecturer on the English classics.

Estrid, to Ethel's unfeigned astonishment, replied—

" Addison contributed to the ' Tatler ' from its earliest start, and wrote not a little of the first volume."

" I shall tell my papa," said Ethel, with a tragical threat. " But suppose this to be the opinion of Addison about aerial beings—which he spells with a capital A and B, you perceive—is it your own opinion, dear ? "

" It is a great pleasure to me," said Estrid, still standing erect, with her hands behind her, " to know that this was Addison's belief ; if I cannot say it is mine, perhaps it is because I have not carefully reflected upon the occurrences of my life, and indeed they have been so few that I can hardly say I have any life at all, much less can I claim among my visitors ' beings of a superior rank to mankind.' "

Nothing excited the good-nature of Ethel so much as to hear Estrid in a monotone give way to doubt or venture on

an expression which had the slightest tinge of pessimism, for then she would proceed to minister to Estrid's mind out of such little vials as she owned, and which answered as well, perhaps, as might a spoonful of jam to satisfy a hungry navvy just come from his day's work.

While these two are trying to penetrate the designs of Providence and pry into the secret machinery by which men are moved—with wires called nerves, like marionettes, as some think, or, as others think, by good and evil angels—let us see what is going on behind other scenes on our stage.

The first thought which occurred to Salter Thyme on waking up after his midnight ramble through Mulberry, was in connection with Harriet Newton and Tom Strawless. Thyme, who had found it necessary for his comfort to live on terms of amity with all classes of men, was now about to incur the displeasure of some by differing from them. He could not bear the thought of Harriet Newton marrying a man who, for the luxuries he bestowed upon her, was dependent upon what he considered the vilest form of making money which exists in the wide range of the vile part of the world. He would first see Tom Strawless, tell him what he thought about his buying gin shops; get him to give it up, and if he could not succeed, he would go straight to the lady herself, and explain the peril which she ran of being ground down to the level of a common creature who was ashamed to be seen selling gin himself, but who was not ashamed to stand behind a screen and receive the profits which were made for him by the tapster whom he suborned.

Thyme, as luck would have it, met Tom Strawless on the Mulberry road, as the one was coming from the town, and the other riding into it. Like all suddenly made converts, Thyme allowed his enthusiasm to trip the heels of his discretion, and he began on Tom without mercy or wisdom. The result was that the invisible purveyor of gin, and visible receiver of the gains thereof, turned on the parson and so bespattered him with Strawless filth and Mulberry mud that he repented in his soul having broached the subject as he had ; but when the gin-monger reminded Thyme of his father's origin—his palace in Cupid's Alley, and his mother's

Coach, Thyme felt all the bitterness of death without release from its pangs. He bowed his head on his breast as the insolent miscreant rode in triumph away.

Thyme was not repenting of his repentance—he was simply passing through the sorrow which was needed to make it a change of mind that could not be repented of. He passed on; but felt an uncommon weakness in the knees as he continued his way to Newton Holme. To his great relief he found Jack Newton at home poring over a voluminous manuscript.

"I hope I don't disturb you," began Thyme as he entered Jack's room.

"By no means; I am rather glad to lift my eyes from a work which is by no means so interesting as a novel, but which for the life of me I can't help reading, although it is only in pen and ink. What will you drink, Thyme?" asked Jack, who knew the parson's gift in that way.

"I have given up all drinking," said Thyme, "except at dinner."

"Since when?" enquired Jack, with considerable surprise.

"Since last night," was the reply; but in a tone of voice which convinced Newton that something very serious was up. "I passed last night," continued the parson, "with my old friend Brydges, who was with me at Oxford you know, a very able fellow, and who has started a new order of men."

"A new order of men?" exclaimed Jack, whose curiosity was aroused; "may I know what it is like, for I am deucedly hard up for something to do. I am not good enough for the church; the bar is not good for me; I am not of the right cast for the army; I am too big a dunce to become a doctor; I am not sufficiently devout to become an architect; or humbug enough to get into Parliament; or enter, what is called, the public service, where the public never see you—never hear of you, unless you get into a scrape—or meet with some unexampled favour from the Prime Minister, when you at once become the much envied bone of all the dogs of the press, and who will fight for you until you become ashamed of yourself for being alive; I can't go into trade, for I haven't a particle of idol worship

in my nature, and I am sure the secret of a man's success behind a counter, whether of a bank, or a pot-house, is a genius for bowing down."

Thyme thought this enumeration of his defects the best testimony that Newton had ever given of his possessing some practical sense, and he called to mind that Jack had distinguished himself in mathematics at Cambridge.

"It is true," said Newton, "and one day my old tutor, Plevin, asked me in a tone of such scathing bitterness, in what part of my carcase I intended to stick my scientific feathers, that I gave up science on the spot, and went and bought a boat."

"I confess I don't see the point," said the parson.

"Very likely not," answered Jack in unmannerly sadness; "but if you had been likened to a peacock, and called a 'purblind Argus, all eyes and no sight,' you might have seen it, and so have given up wearying your flesh to get a little wholesome pleasure."

"I suppose Plevin was a disappointed man," remarked Thyme.

"Very," was the reply; "his tutorship was his sole income, and his spacious and splendid intellect was employed in a task equalled only, as he used to say, in importance and value to the nation to that of a prisoner turning a crank."

Thyme laughed not unpleasantly. He thought that Jack would be the very fellow for Brydges, if there were an opening, and he proceeded to explain to Newton the new order of men.

"By Jove, that sounds likely. You will give me a note to your friend?" enquired Jack, quite seriously.

Thyme, who had dwelt with great minuteness on what he had seen while in company with Brydges, more particularly in anything which related to the sale of gin, now saw his way made plain to talk of the youth Strawless to Jack, and he succeeded in forming in the mind of the brother of Harriet Newton even a greater horror of gin-vending than possessed his own, for Thyme had no sister to lose and Jack had.

The two shook hands and parted, and matters of great pith and moment grew out of the apparently careless words which had been dropped between them. Newton had been reading Quicksett's report on the Forest of Melford, and it occurred to him that here, if in any department of the public service, Brydges' new order of police was required. What waste might have been prevented, what wholesale robbery of the people's land been made impossible, and how might thousands of the people themselves been saved from calamity and woe if there had been in existence a living, responsible constable of Melford Forest? And for the first time in his life Jack Newton perceived in a vivid and original manner that there is great scope in common life for the healthful and happy employment of a man's powers, and not a little gratification in performing many of its duties.

Cheered by his communion with Jack Newton, Thyme's thoughts wore a different hue to that they bore on his parting with the gin-vendor Strawless, and with his mind refreshed, his heart softened, and his tongue loosed, he went his way to Spencer Grove.

Estrid and Ethel were still in the garden when Thyme arrived, and he begged permission to go and see them there. They were yet occupied in the "Tatler"-Addison subject when the clergyman came up to them on the lawn. He gave to each of them some flowers. Estrid received hers with thanks, and began to enjoy their perfume; Ethel, with her inveterate childishness, began to compare hers with those which had been given to Estrid. But it was a happy thought of Thyme to bring with him those green and purple gems of the earth, for to Estrid flowers brought with their sweetness of form, and breath and colour, the music and the warmth of love.

"I am so glad you have come," said Ethel, addressing Thyme; "we were talking about Aërial Beings who attend the steps of man in the tracts of Ambition, of Business, and of Pleasure," reading from the old volume, which she still held in her hands. "Is that orthodox?" she enquired, expanding her pretty nostrils over her flowers.

Thyme, who had not cultivated the art of making his

vocation pleasant among men, having conceived a horror of being convicted of talking shop if he talked about God or His flowers, stammered out something of his experience of the past night and of the morning, and said that coming in contact with one's fellow-creatures had in it much of spiritual influence no doubt. "Even flowers," he added, "which the 'fairies use for their charactery,' have been known to change by a single glance of the eye the fell purpose of a man bent on killing himself."

"I have heard of that," said Estrid.

"What do you mean by charactery?" enquired Ethel.

"The same," said Thyme, for he had read his Shakespeare, "as Brutus meant when he told Portia,

'I will construe to thee
All the charactery of my sad brows.'"

"Then," exclaimed Ethel, "flowers are epistles which the fairies write to mortals who are gifted in the fairies' tongue? And there is a language of flowers after all?"

"No doubt that is Shakespeare's meaning," said Thyme; and there was about the young parson an absence of that seeming insolence which comes from health and animal spirits which had always marked his previous conversation.

They pressed him to tell them any news of himself, for his manner impressed them with the feeling that something very serious had happened to him.

And as much as Thyme dare to relate he told the ladies of his expedition through the streets of Mulberry with Brydges, and he also gave them a description of Brydges—what a handsome fellow he was, how strong, and that his mind much partook of the grace and well-proportioned strength of his form.

"I never thought till now," said Ethel, "that there was any honour and glory in being a man, and now I wish I could be Dr. Brydges, if only for a single night."

Estrid had some such thought, although she did not give way to the weakness of expressing it; but the idea of an order of police formed exclusively of gentlemen entered her

mind like the sun, as he pours his rays through a transparent cloud on a morning in spring.

"I suppose," she said, "the Doctor calls his new police the Civil Guard?"

Both Ethel and Thyme were greatly surprised at the interest which Estrid manifested in Brydges' new police, a subject, as they conceived it to be, so foreign to the gentleness and grace of her character and person. Thyme, however, who was as much pleased as surprised, said that he was quite sure the name had not occurred to Brydges, that it was the very thing he wanted, and that he would write and tell him of the happy remark.

"The name is neither original nor new, nor even the idea," said Estrid. "It may be new to us, but both the name and the idea of employing gentlemen as police began in Spain some time ago as a voluntary movement among the upper classes. *La Guardia Civil* is, however, a military organization."

"This is quite beyond me," said Ethel; "have you studied medicine, my dear?" she enquired of Estrid with a comic grimace.

Thyme also was a little shaken in the hasty opinion he had formed of Estrid, and no doubt he belonged to that large mass of mankind who chiefly occupied themselves with inherited ideas, one of which was that a beautiful woman had no brains, was only intended for ornament, and was absolutely incapable of original thought; he was certainly inclined to believe that a mind which could occupy itself with the civil guard, could not be much occupied with love. Still, the conversation was pleasant, Estrid was able to associate Thyme with a new and better subject than that of Cupid's Alley, and he, certainly, no longer dwelt on the pain which unwittingly he had caused to the lady whom he adored.

"We began with aerial beings," remarked Ethel, who always tried, but never succeeded to keep in the hunt, "and we have arrived at a new order of police."

"Having passed through the charactery of flowers," said Estrid, giving a glance of acknowledgment to Thyme,

"After all," said Thyme, "when you come to think of it, what a numerous body of police there are in existence. I mean, of course, of men and women; gentlemen and ladies; even boys and girls, who are employed in carrying into execution the unwritten laws which society has made for its protection."

"What a spirited instance you have in Howard," said Estrid.

"The very finest instance," said Thyme, "and I shall hasten my next visit to Mulberry to see what explanation policeman Brydges has to give me of his claiming to be the originator of the idea of the civil guard."

"Then Mrs. Fry," exclaimed Ethel, "hurrah! I shall go and apply for an appointment myself;" and she began to warm to the discussion.

"It is true," said Thyme, "that Brydges is paid; and both Howard and Fry worked for love, and in that the idea may be new."

"There is no harm in working for money," said Ethel; it is a sort of evidence that you are in the service of society;" and she was quite pleased with herself, and confessed that she had not the remotest notion of how she got the idea, or where it came from.

"If you like to look upon authors, who instruct and amuse us as part of your civil guard, there would be no objection I suppose?"

"And that is a delightful notion I think to have of authors, at least of authors who write our lives, depict our manners, and hold up to the summer breath of a gentle satire our faults and follies," said Thyme.

"I declare," said Ethel, "that up to this moment I have looked upon people who write books—excepting of course the great writers—as a low set of mortals, such as people who dye hair, and undertake to teach young ladies the use of the globes and deportment for the low sum of one hundred guineas a year. I shall now turn author myself."

"And what department of letters will you enter?" enquired Estrid, with a smile, which made her face much resemble an ample rose.

"I shall write on the art of love," was the reply made with distended nostrils.

"That has been done already," they both told her, laughing.

"But," she replied with great fun, "not by me."

By means of this free and easy commerce with each other, the day which dawned with lowering looks broke into bright smiles; and human life which to one at least had been found to be festered, full of sores, and anguish, and capable of becoming one continuous hideous torture, might be relieved of many of its calamities, while some could be so mitigated as to make of them a means of grace.

CHAPTER XVIII.

"Now, by my life, this day grows wondrous hot:
Some airy devil hovers in the sky,
And pours down mischief."—*King John*, iii. 1.

ESTRID was profoundly moved by the grandeur of the great forest, now so full to her of memories which she could cherish, and she had observed in her own experience that any delight which she had enjoyed in the free air, beneath the open sky, and surrounded by trees and other precious things of the flowering earth, came oftener unsolicited to her recollection in afterdays than any of the indoor pleasures of the world's company. Therefore, as the time of her visit to Spencer Grove was drawing to a close, she spent as much of it as she could in the glades of the glorious wood close by; and it is certain but for the attractions of Melford Forest she would not, by prolonging her visit at Spencer Grove, have run the risk of meeting again many of the persons whose acquaintance she had made. She was much pleased with Mr. Hillen; Mackworth, no doubt, had for her a charm of constancy that made discourse with him a happy exercise and a most delightful custom: Thyme had certainly

improved in her estimation, and she hoped that he, too, might often visit her when she was happy and come to her mind at such time as it might be unoccupied. She could never forget the music of Mozart at Wincote, nor would she part with the sorrow and the pain associated with the parson in their visit to Mulberry. He was, without question, kind—and to Estrid a man without kindness of heart was a tree without fruit, a body without a soul ; and if a man wore in his manners and on his face even the garb of kindness, she was attracted to him as if by magnetic force ; and if he stamped any enduring deed with his own good-nature, and made love current among his friends in forms of bounty, goodwill, and fine feeling, she was ready to worship him, and, if she could, would stoop down, take out the latchets of his shoes, and bind them—to use a figure—with the strings of her heart.

This was Estrid's religion—a matter she never willingly talked about, nor would she discuss it. All that she was ever known to say on a subject so common, yet so vital, was that a person's religion was bound to be something, like his handwriting, learned in the first instance after set forms and models, under tutors and governors ; but by the time you come to sign cheques, or witness deeds, or write love letters, the handwriting will have become a very different thing to what it was when learnt at school, for it will have become a personal possession, an attribute of the writer's own nature, sometimes indicative of character, though for the most part, and in most cases, it will be a mere effort of the imitative faculty. But Estrid was nothing of a controversialist, and hers was a nature too deeply steeped in kindness to allow of her power of discrimination becoming purely critical. It had not even occurred to her that Thyme was a clergyman.

It is probable that Estrid's fondness for the society of trees and the ministry of the winds, the clouds, and the flowers, was induced by the early loss of her mother, while the absence of a sister's love, as well as the lack of any deep attachment to anyone of her own sex, produced a seriousness of mind that was more apparent than real. Whether Estrid would have been less reserved in her intercourse with the

world, or more open to the assaults of love, had she possessed a mother to whom she could have opened her heart always, or a sister who would have opened it for her now and then, may be left to conjecture.

It was Mrs. Strawless who first started the notion that for a lady with Miss Fount's beauty—for there was no question about that, even in her mind—who was also young, and yet so uncommon shy, from whom almost everybody in a sort of way kept aloof, and few men courted, showed that there must be a screw loose somewhere. But it is evident that this good soul, as Mrs. Strawless was sometimes called, had no foundation either for her surmises or her opinions, and what she said was nothing but a temporary giving way to that dogmatism which includes all earthly and heavenly things in its sweep, and is one of the peculiarities of the provincial mind. Perhaps no other creature in the world but Mrs. Strawless would have had the courage to call Estrid shy. But courage, or what passes for it, is oftentimes nothing else than the folly which rushes in where superior beings do fear to tread, and what Mrs. Strawless meant by being shy was not the comeliness of modesty, but rather something between fear and alarm at being known or closely inspected. If, by a flight of the imagination, we could get Mrs. Strawless to go and consult the great Italian master of human passion about Estrid, and he should tell her "this sovran woman is one who desires much, hopes little, and asks nothing," the mother of Tom Strawless would have burst into a loud laugh and gone and helped herself to some gin-and-water, for she was undoubtedly, with all her good nature, very vulgar.

It was Stanley Hillen who, of all the good and evil, the fond and foolish critics of Estrid's nature, admiring her way of life and the quality of her love, estimated her aright. But he was a man of uncommon quietness of thought, whose powers of perception were made keen by the purity of his life. Estrid, he said, was not only capable of sacrificing herself, she had probably long practised a self-sacrifice that must be great and would prove notable, and hers was a love which loved "to the level of every day's most quiet need,

and not the love which shows itself by fits and starts." But he kept this opinion to himself, and only acted upon it when he would give himself an exquisite pleasure.

Salter Thyme has already given his opinion about Estrid, and each time that he has seen her the conviction has deepened that Estrid, of all the women he ever knew, would most adorn a house, sanctify a home, and make a fellow happy, and the effect she had produced on him produced a something which corresponded to his opinion of her.

As for Arthur Quicksett, such as all true lovers are, such was he—

“ Unstaid and skittish in all motions else,
Save in the constant image of the creature
That is beloved.”

And there was this difference between the love inspired in these two men, that whereas Thyme envied the social life of some of his married friends, and would fain emulate their joys, who had seen their hearths made snug, their chimney-corners bright, and the whole home musical with delightful children, Quicksett, on the other hand, had never seen married life except under discouraging conditions. He did not know a man of his own class whom marriage had improved, whilst he was painfully aware of many whom it had marred; and, what could not have escaped his vision, it had been his lot to see many women in the most barefaced manner carry their mouths so as to be caught by whatever accidental monogamous hook they might swim against, as well as he had known other women, mothers, who literally threw their daughters into every pond where men did fish for the best fry that would rise to their lure, not to say into rivers had he known such mothers cast their children which ran through great estates and ornamental grounds, over which all sorts and conditions of titled and infamous men held free warren. Arthur Quicksett had seen all this, and more, which need not now receive recordation, and it had served to keep him aloof from married waters, or from any kind of fishing which involved his being taken, for example, after the manner of Sennacherib. In justice to him and to

the better class of women—by whom is meant the women who have not forsaken their own mercy—it should be said that Quicksett was not altogether *sans* experience in that changeableness and variety of human nature which is brought to pass by change of social circumstances, but it was an experience reaped by his intercourse with men. He was a member of several clubs, and a favourite member of one small club in particular, which he preferred to all the others. It was once Quicksett's ill luck to recommend a man for election to this select circle of modest gentlemen, and who, but for Quicksett, would certainly not have been admitted. The man was highly spoken of by his intimate friends, who were also intimates of Quicksett. The newly-elected man turned out a thorough disappointment, even to some of his friends; his intercourse with other members of the club, whom he did not know, outside its walls was attended with pain or discomfort, and the first man whom he insulted was Quicksett himself. This made a deep impression on Quicksett, but his annoyance was not purely of a personal kind; he bitterly repented having been the means of inflicting on others the society or the presence of a being the very sight of whom would spoil a man's appetite or make his dinner disagree with him. Quicksett thought that there was some analogy between club life and matrimony—you could never tell how a man would turn out, however highly he had been spoken of, until it was too late, and no man alive could know what a woman married would be until she had some legal title to make herself and her husband unhappy.

When, however, Quicksett first saw Estrid he loved her. All the terrible examples of his married friends and his experience of men in clubs were not only forgotten, they were scattered and consumed like mists under the wheels of the sun, and to be in her presence—to hear her speak, to see her move even an eyelid—was rapture; but to hear her sing, or to touch her hand, was hallowed bliss—as palpable and full of glory as the light of stars when neither sun nor moon appears and the darkness is ruled by peace and quiet. He had purposely kept himself from the Hillens as much

as he could, partly on account of his having acquired what, in Wesleyan theology, is known as the Assurance of the Spirit, and also because he much desired to complete his labours in the matter of Melford Forest, and there might have been other reasons; but having accomplished this, as far as it was then possible, so uncertain was he of himself, being utterly enthralled by his love, that he prayed Jack Newton to revise what he had written of his report to the Royal Commissioners, and to canvass with him the conclusions at which he had arrived with regard to the enclosing of valuable parts of the forest and, generally, what is known as the disafforestation of the Forest of Melford.

On the day that Jack was engaged in this friendly service, which, as we have seen, was the day that Thyme called upon him in the matter of *T. Strawless v. Harriet Newton*, Quicksett was away alone to explore one part of Melford Forest which he had discovered for himself and of which no one had made any mention. This was a double dyke of uncommon construction, running in a curved direction for more than a mile, and having well-marked sunk moles, or mounds, at regular intervals, so that the bed of this dyke from the dovetailed mounds would give a serpentine motion to a stream of water running through it. Quicksett could come to no other conclusion than that this was the *enceinte* of a very ancient Roman place. The ditch was quite dry, but the grass was thick and close, and looked as well kept as if it had been part of an ancient lawn.

On arriving at this hidden part of the forest he dismounted, and led his horse through the windings of that forgotten monument of very old life in England.

Judge of his surprise and amazement when, having reached about the middle of this sequestered work, he saw two horsemen and a lady, also on horseback, just taking leave of each other, the lady going one way with the youngest of the men, and the elder man coming to meet him.

But the lady was none other than Estrid. Quicksett at once mounted, and was proceeding to cross one of the sloping mounds of the dyke, when he was accosted by a voice which he knew.

"How are you?"

"How d'ye do, Mr. Bond? Pardon me a moment; I must go and speak to Miss Fount."

Stephen Bond quickly turned his horse's head, rode up as close as the ground permitted to Quicksett, and said—well knowing what he said, and with what emphasis it was necessary to say it—

"That lady is not Miss Fount, nor are you the first who has made a mistake so easy to make. This is a curious piece of antiquity," continued Bond, carelessly.

"You know the lady from whom you have just parted, and you know, of course, that she is not Miss Fount?" said Quicksett, rapidly, carrying his reins as one who knows how to start his horse—like starting an arrow from a bow, or a hound from the leash.

"Certainly," said Stephen, who had no difficulty in discovering that the image of Miss Fount must be deeply impressed on what the reader might, if so inclined, call the plastic region of Arthur Quicksett—that which not only moulds to its own design but which can also be moulded by another—for not only was there deep astonishment marked on his face: his voice expressed anxiety and even doubt. Stephen, however, assured him, and ventured to add (as a quieting piece of intelligence) that the lady whom he had erroneously taken for Miss Fount was shortly to be married to George Chetwin.

With this explanation Quicksett appeared to be satisfied, and he would have parted from Bond and ridden on; but the latter said if he was returning to Newton Holme he should be glad of his company.

"I should like to see the end of this most remarkable piece of work," said Quicksett.

"It will not take us five minutes," said the other, and he went on in front, like one acquainted with the way.

They rode up the bank, and came in front of a very modest little house built of weather-stained stone, which stood apparently in the centre of some land somewhat indefinitely sketched out by the old trees which had been left standing.

"Do you know, Mr. Bond, to whom yon house belongs?

It seems to me that this forest gets larger and more mysterious the more I see of it," said Quicksett, looking around.

"It belongs to me and the lady whom you saw but now," replied Stephen; glad to talk on a subject which had recently become a matter of public comment with one officially connected with the Forest of Melford.

"Then, Mr. Bond, I shall request you to do me the favour of calling at Mr. Newton's, and help me to prick in on my map, this, that is now evident, can be nothing else than an old Roman Camp."

"I shall do so with great pleasure," said Stephen.

"What a marvellous likeness there is between Miss Fount and your lady partner in the Roman Camp," said Quicksett, looking for the first time very attentively at Stephen.

Who answered with perfect candour—"The likeness was seen at a glance by me the instant I saw Miss Fount at Spencer Grove; but singular to tell, Mr. Fount could see no likeness at all between them, and was amazed at our referring to it. Lord Paramont on the other hand, who knows both ladies, was so struck with the likeness that the moment he saw Margaret he was quite sure that she was Miss Fount."

This recalled the remarks which Strawless had made about the "splendid Margaret," and explained them; and Quicksett was not a little pleased to find that Estrid had escaped from the coarse praise of Mr. Strawless; still he was chagrined to be reminded that some one else could be mistaken for Estrid, or Estrid be mistaken for another; his curiosity was aroused, and he enquired of Stephen if there were any other signs of similarity between the two ladies besides those which a common observer might discover.

"It is unquestionable that both ladies sing admirably, and there is as great a similarity of voice as there is of features between them," said Bond.

Which, so far from quieting Quicksett, made him all the more curious and full of questions; for it was Estrid's voice, and her passion for music which distinguished her in his estimation from all other women in the world.

And Bond, to close the subject, said "There is one other

likeness—both ladies, I believe, lost their mothers when young. But, Miss Fount is an English lady, and Margaret, my Margaret, as I may call her, was born in Spain."

"Very curious," was all that Quicksett remarked; and the two parted, having made an engagement to meet the next day to help to mark on the commissioner's map the position of what was now to be known as the Roman Camp. After these two had separated, Quicksett was seized with an uncommon restlessness. He had controlled his longing to see Estrid, or kept it within bounds, and now of a sudden he wished to feast his eyes afresh on her who had, if not changed his nature, at least given him a delightful, and an all absorbing reason for his being a man. Like a traveller who made the independent discovery of an ancient inscription on a fallen pillar in the desert, comes home to find that another has given of it an altogether different report, cannot rest until he has verified the truth of his first impressions, goes back to learn, if it were possible, that he had made a mistake, so Quicksett once more yearned to see the face of his beloved; to hear her voice; to mark the folds of her dress; the sweep of her hair from the straight forehead over the low lying ear which, like a small white shell lay in its way to the bend of the neck, and to mark, if in her presence, he was the same lover as when absent, and above all, she the same love-inspiring goddess as when he saw her first.

There was no difficulty in going to Spencer Grove, the Newtons were always welcome there; and if any domestic arrangement might be found to hinder the commingling of the weaker and the nobler sexes, the men would not fail to meet a hearty welcome in Mr. Hillen's room, and Harriet no less from Ethel.

So after dinner, Jack Newton, his sister, and Quicksett went to the Grove, with the certainty of receiving hospitality, nor were they disappointed.

They were all in the drawing room, seated round the centre table, which was now covered with a cloth of such enchanting colours that, without exaggeration, Harriet Newton was fairly lifted off her feet on beholding it, nor was

she at all; a girl easily carried out of herself, like Ethel for example, but she was too good to withhold her admiration when it was, as in this case, fairly demanded. She said,

"I don't say this is heavenly, for I don't know anything about Heaven; but if each of these colours carried its own odour it would be the most precious thing I have ever seen on the earth."

They all laughed at this unwonted form of speech in Harriet, and began to enquire after each other's healths. Mrs. Hillen was standing erect with her gold spectacles on, regarding with admiring looks the arabesque cloth, her left hand resting on Estrid's shoulder.

Quicksett had not noticed the table-cloth, but went, shook hands with Ethel and her father, and found his easy way to Mrs. Hillen and Estrid. A smile of uncommon gentleness rested on her face, which became slightly animated at Quicksett's approach. She was seated on a low damask-covered bank. Shaking hands and looking up at the same time, she discovered to him an expression of the eyes more tender and winning than he had ever witnessed in woman, and it was an amplification of all that was lovely in her which he had already perceived. He made no comparisons, he was not there to analyse or contrast, but simply to worship, to enjoy, to feel the sense of goodness and the bliss of being.

"You're recht welcome t' oor rockin', Misther Quixote," said Mrs. Hillen, "but ye ha' na notet the braw cloth which Mistress Esthrid has made, and made for us."

"Mamma, I have told you a hundred times that this is Mr. Quicksett; and what on earth is a 'rockin'?'?" cried Ethel in her merriest notes and kissing Harriet, and shaking the two men by the hand with perhaps equal cordiality.

"What is a 'rockin',' Mrs. Hillen?" enquired Quicksett, for he too was fond of the old lady, and his fondness had greatly increased since the welcome she had given him, not only in the words she had expressed, but in the taking of his hand with her right, while she retained her left hand on Estrid's shoulder. The old lady replied, looking roguishly all the time at Ethel—

“ On Fasten-e'en we had a rockin',
To ca' the crack and weave our stockin'
And there was muckle fun and jokin',
Ye needna doubt;
At length we had a hearty yokin'
At sang about.”



The dear old thing finding everybody pleased, and receiving no interruptions from Father Hillen or Ethel, went on without being asked—

“ There was ae sang, amang the rest,
Aboon them a' it pleased me best,
That some kind husband had addrest
To some sweet wife;
It thrill'd the heart-strings to the breast,
A' to the life.”

“ So then a ‘rockin’ is, after all, a meeting of friends where the ladies spin and the men look on and admire ? ” said Quicksett.

“ Just a batch o’ frien’s,” was the answer.

“ I think,” broke in Ethel, who had not for nearly an hour taken her eyes off the beautiful cloth, “ that I should, after all, like it better without this streak of yellow. What do you say, Mr. Quicksett ? ”

But he, although appealed to so directly, answered nothing, nor had he expressed any opinion, as had the others, on the merits of the work, and even though Mrs. Hillen had reminded him of her remark he would still have kept silence; but for all that he regarded the brilliant cloth, with its Moorish design and ancient Arab mingling of colours, with the keenest interest. He had seen nothing like it out of Egypt. Like it, perhaps yes; but no more like than the Arab horses occasionally to be seen in London are like to those in the royal stables of Persia, or even at Pera. It was a likeness with a difference—the difference, namely, between Estrid and Margaret.

At length they had, through the tender insistence of Mrs. Hillen, some music, all vocal, and in which all took some part.

A trivial incident, brought about by the restless Ethel—

who, what may be the fate which awaits her in another life, will never know what it is in this that distinguishes the queen-bee from all other bees—sent Quicksett home **none** the less happy or exalted, but more thoughtful.

Something had befallen an H, and, whatever Ethel's frivolities, she generally had a slight substratum of sense underneath them. As the unhappy letter alluded to was dropped, and this buzzing piece of spoiled womanhood stooped to pick it up—to the great delight of the person to whom it of right belonged—she exclaimed, addressing herself to Jack Newton—

"Why are we so anxious about one letter of the alphabet, while nearly all the others are so dreadfully neglected?"

She would have put the question to Quicksett, but he was much engaged.

"It is a pure fashion," said Jack. "We used to make the first letter of the alphabet a special object of care and conflict; but the A controversy is limited now to the confines of the two great Universities. The B gets into hot water in the north of Spain, where it becomes a V; the D, like the London H, is dropped altogether in Andalusia; while the H has no existence in any Spaniard's speech, although the letter, in the Spanish printer's division of his case, is as plentiful as it is in our own. The E——"

Jack was going on to say, is even more maltreated, and that by the H partizans than any other English letter, but he was interrupted by the impetuous Ethel, who, turning to Estrid, demanded—

"Is all this orthodox, and do you approve?"

"I was not listening," Estrid said.

"You talk Spanish?" enquired Quicksett in a pleased voice, for it assorted with her complexion that she should.

"I was born in Spain," said an equally pleased voice in answer.

And it was this answer which sent Quicksett home in a thoughtful mood, but never once did his thoughts rebel against his love, or bring his head in collision with his heart.

(*To be continued.*)



PEG WOFFINGTON.

WOMEN are now much as they were a hundred years ago. Notwithstanding railways, telegraphs, and telephones, each age is but a reproduction of the past, and in no way do we see this more apparent than in the *toilettes* and *modes* of the present day. Fashion, like history, repeats itself. There are the same richly-flowered *brocades*, the clinging skirts, the quaint head-gear of the Georgian era, the powder, the dye, and, shall we say, the paint? But what London *belle*, as she trails her dainty robes along the Row, or displays her charming face in a bonnet *à la* Woffington, gives one thought to the brilliant actress whose costume of a century back she now so perfectly imitates. And yet the career of Margaret Woffington is replete with interest and romance, for she played no unimportant part in the stage history of the age just vanished.

Born in a miserable slum of Dublin on the 18th October, 1720, poor Peggy began to work for her living almost as soon as she could walk, for her father, a bricklayer, dying shortly after her birth, left her mother, herself, and sister in a state bordering on destitution. The inhabitants of the city who lived near the Liffey were obliged to have their water supply brought from the river, so the child earned an honest penny during the first few years of her life as a water-carrier, her sprightly beauty even thus early attracting the attention of her employers. A spirit of ambition, however, burned in the childish bosom of Peggy; every moment she could snatch from her daily work she was to be seen hover-

ing near the doors of a play-house, watching with awe-struck eyes the gay dresses and odd antics of a troupe of rope-dancers brought over from France by a Madame Violante and exhibited in Dublin, where such a display, having the charm of novelty, naturally excited lively notice. But even acrobats and rope-dancers pall in time, so soon the enterprising Frenchwoman cast her eyes around in search of some other raree-show whereby to amuse her patrons. She hit at length upon the then new-fangled idea of an opera performed entirely by children, selecting her Liliputian company with remarkable tact and precision. Madame had often observed Peggy hanging about the play-booth in Fowne's Alley, for her mother used to sell oranges to the theatre-goers at the entrance; and many a customer stopping to buy fruit would linger a moment to say a word in praise of the child whose beauty and vivacity were now engaged for the entertainment of the good people of Dublin. So little Peggy Woffington made her first appearance as Polly Peacham in the "Beggar's Opera" with great applause, although none present in the poor, tawdry booth that night could dream they were witnessing the *début* of an actress who later on achieved such a marvellous triumph. And yet this was her first step on the ladder which eventually raised her to fame. But no signs of coming greatness were then visible in Peggy's career, for, ere many months had passed away, a rival establishment opened in Smock Alley, to the dismay of Madame Violante, who saw the ungrateful multitude flock in crowds to the new performance of "the opposition." She bravely held her own as long as she could, but at length empty benches and a still more empty exchequer compelled her to try her fortune elsewhere.

Peggy was now thrown on the world again, with no idea, however, of returning to her old life. Submitting to circumstances, she joined the ranks of the enemy, accepting a very paltry engagement to dance between the acts, being told at the same time that her harsh voice and decided brogue were two insuperable impediments to her ever succeeding as an actress. Deeply mortified and indignant, she began to think of quitting the stage altogether, when lucky fate stepped

upon the scene and turned the scales of fortune in her favour. A favourite actress, who had been duly announced to play the part of Ophelia, was suddenly taken ill at the last moment. The vacant place was offered to Peg Woffington, who with daring impudence determined to undertake the impersonation of this most pathetic of Shakespeare's creations. Attired in a wretchedly-fitting black cotton velvet gown adorned with spangles, the new Ophelia carried the audience by storm, and the curtain fell amidst enthusiastic shouts of applause. Doubtless her charming appearance gained the favour of the house as thoroughly as her acting, for at this period of her life *she was a treat to see*. The figure was simply perfect, lissome, graceful, and rounded; her complexion of dazzling fairness, set off by a mass of hair of the blue-black raven tint, which heightened the effect of her long-fringed dark eyes, lit up by a roguish archness impossible to describe. A portrait by Hogarth now hangs in the Garrick Club, which displays Peg in all the first flush of her radiant charms, her features bearing a striking resemblance to those of Nell Gwynne, whose character and disposition were also strangely analogous.

Peg's crowning triumph was, however, yet to come, when she first appeared as Sir Harry Wildair in "The Constant Couple," which ever after remained her favourite part. Never was she so irresistibly bewitching as in her impersonation of male characters, the ease, *nonchalance*, and dash of her manner completely electrifying her audiences. The ambitious actress now longed for a wider sphere in which to display her histrionic talents, and set off unexpectedly for London, much to the amazement of her Irish friends and admirers. The following romantic version of her journey to the great city is very characteristic of the woman, and is thus detailed :—

"At this epoch she left the Irish stage suddenly and went to England with an admirer, whose addresses she had for some time received with favour, and who beguiled her from Dublin by talking of marriage, while engaged from mercenary views to another. She discovered his perfidy, and played off a fair counter-stroke in return. Habited as an officer, she went down to the

country to the lady's residence a few days before the intended marriage. A public ball was given by some of the family to celebrate the approaching event. To this she obtained an invitation, and so disguised herself by theatrical skill that she escaped discovery even by her faithless friend. She had the address to engage the bride-elect to walk a *minuet* with her, and then took an occasion of discovering to her the real character of her lover, and showed some of his letters containing protestations of eternal fidelity to Peg Woffington, an actress. The traitor's match was broken off, and his mistress dismissed him with infinite scorn."

Well rid of such a worthless scamp, Peg arrived in London unknown and alone, possessing only her face and her true Irish wit for her fortune. She at once endeavoured to find an engagement, calling upon Rich, the manager of Covent Garden, eighteen times without obtaining admittance. On the nineteenth Peg thundered a rat-tat at the door, saying to the astonished footman—

"Go instantly to your master, and tell him my name is Woffington, that I came to ask for an engagement, and shall certainly come no more."

The man hastened to obey.

"Is she an Irishwoman?" demanded Rich.

"She speaks like a furriner," was the reply.

"What is she to look at?"

"More like a hangel than any woman as ever I see'd," returned the man, enthusiastically.

"Then show her up, by all means," exclaimed his master; and in a few seconds the charming Peg, radiant in beauty and grace, stood before the manager.

It would be difficult to say which of the two felt most surprise, for she found Rich lolling upon a sofa, with a play-book in one hand and a cup of rare old Chelsea in the other, from which he quietly sipped his tea, whilst around him frisked seven-and-twenty cats, of various sizes and colours—black, white, tabby, and tortoiseshell; tom and lady cats—forming a complete "happy family," some gambolling on the floor, others eating out of his mouth, or perched upon his knees and shoulders. The result of the interview was as satisfactory to the manager and actress as the result of

the engagement proved to both. A crowded house and ample returns nightly testified to the success of Peg, her acting being voted inimitable by those best capable of judging. Although Garrick is said to have preferred her impersonation of Shakespeare's heroines, there can be no doubt that her *forte* was high comedy, in which she signally excelled.

Before many months were over, *la Belle Irlandaise* became the toast of the day and the fashion ; men about town raved of her lovely face and figure, women of *ton* jealously criticised her appearance in vain, while the cultivated of both sexes pronounced her dramatic talents of no common order. A marvellous triumph, indeed, for the *ci-devant* water-carrier of the Liffey !

Peg's suitors were legion—*cela va sans dire*. Beauty, genius, and wit combined in one woman draw many worshippers to her shrine, and it requires a deep sense of religious duty to resist the intoxicating incense of adulation offered on all sides. The poor Irish girl knew little of her own faith, which for centuries has rendered the chastity of her country-women almost a proverb. Gifted as she was with great and noble qualities, it is certainly probable that under other training, and amidst other surroundings, Peg would have been a very different woman. She said in her later days, when speaking of the stage :—" There is no position so full of temptation. At the bottom of my heart I always loved and honoured virtue ; but the stage made me a worthless woman."

While desiring to find every excuse for her glaring irregularities of conduct, we must beg to differ from Mistress Woffington in this last remark. The stage is what women make it. Look at her own *compatriotes*, Eliza O'Neill and Elizabeth Farren, besides a host of others in our own day, who are living refutations of Peg's reckless assertion.

On one occasion, after having been more enthusiastically encored than usual in her character of Sir Harry Wildair, Peg rushed excitedly into the green-room, exclaiming with great glee :—

" Mr. Quin, Mr. Quin, I really believe half the house take me for a man ! "

"The other half know to the contrary, madam," retorted the sharp-tongued manager.

The actress laughed heartily, and with infinite piquancy used to relate this joke against herself.

Horace Walpole says, in one of his letters, "Somebody asked me at the play what had become of Mrs. Woffington. I replied, 'She is taken off by Colonel Cæsar.' Lord Tyrawley said, 'I suppose it is a case of *aut Cæsar aut nullus*.'"

This Lord Tyrawley (a well-known *roué* of the day) was the father of George Anne Bellamy. He lived to the age of eighty-four, still aping the dandy of his early days, which made Lord Chesterfield remark, "Tyrawley has been dead these many years, but he does not choose to have it known."

As for Horace Walpole, he could be as spiteful as a dismissed servant when it pleased him, no fair judge of one whom he invariably styles "an impudent Irish-faced girl."

There can be little doubt Peg was a fascinating woman. Any prejudice conceived against her vanished in the sunshine of her warm loveliness. Garrick succumbed utterly beneath the magic spell of her charms. It is recorded that, in spite of her frailties, he would have gladly married her, had Peg been so minded; but she obstinately resisted his entreaties on this subject, some strong feeling, known to herself alone, preventing her ever entertaining the idea of matrimony.

The green-room at Covent Garden must have been an amusing scene. Many were the battles fought behind the *coulisses*, where Peg encountered several dangerous rivals—the fair Susanna Cibber, Kitty Clive, the "blue-eyed Bellamy." Kitty Clive was her bitterest foe. Kitty, brimful of spirits and mischief, could not be called a beauty, although Horace Walpole says she was "bonny and bewitching"; but her private life deserved the highest encomiums. So the fine ladies and *beaux* of the day all visited Kitty, while Peg was necessarily shut out from good female society.

"A pretty face," exclaimed Kitty, on one occasion, "of course causes a multiplication of lovers."

"And a plain one," retorted Peg, "insures a vast overflow of unmarketable virtue."

Peg could be at times both coarse and vulgar, showing pretty plainly the stock from whence she sprang, according to the memoirs of George Anne Bellamy. The two actresses played together in Dryden's "All for Love" for Quin's benefit during the season of 1749, Bellamy sustaining the part of Octavia, and Peg that of Cleopatra. The Duchess of Queensbury honoured the theatre that night with her presence, sending round a message to George Anne expressing great curiosity to visit the green-room, which she had heard was superior to many fashionable *salons* in wit and politeness. Miss Bellamy, therefore, escorted her patroness behind the scenes the moment the play came to an end; but conceive the horror of the actress, on opening the door, to find revealed the charming Woffington, still robed as Egypt's queen, but now flourishing a pot of porter in her hands, loudly vociferating, "Confusion to Order! Let Liberty thrive!" A congenial company surrounded the table, loaded with mutton pies and drinkables. The elegant duchess stood petrified for an instant, then fled abruptly, muttering, "Is hell broke loose?" The following day, when the mortified Bellamy called to apologise, her Grace smiled and said, "Really, from what I saw last night, I should think that in taste and delicacy the Norwood gipsies are at least on a par with the ladies of the theatre."

Peg paid many a visit to her own country, where on every occasion a warm welcome greeted her. The enthusiasm of the people of Dublin knew no bounds, making her stay there not only a social but a pecuniary success. With the original Beefsteak Club the name of Peg Woffington will ever be associated. It was instituted by Sheridan in 1754, who installed the fascinating actress as president. All the celebrities of the capital frequented these meetings; wit, repartee, and *bon-mots* going side by side with conviviality and good fare. We read in a letter addressed to the Countess of Orrery—"Mrs. Woffington is the only theme in and out of the theatre. Her performances are admirable. She appeared in 'Lady Townly,' and since Mrs. Oldfield there has not been such a complete Lady Townly. In Andromache her grief was dignified and her deportment elegant, but in

Hermione she discovered such talents as have not been displayed since Mrs. Porter," and so on. The character which seems especially to have charmed the Irish was Lady Betty Modish, in which she surpassed herself. Thunders of applause broke from the audience as she stepped upon the stage arrayed in brocaded *sacque*, hooped petticoat, laces, furbelows, and fan *en suite*; her coquettish face rendered *plus coquette que jamais* by the little black patches, the powdered, be-diamonded curls, while the whole house was convulsed with laughter to see Peg, whose antecedents were well known, play off the airs and graces of a town madam with all the *savoir faire* imaginable!

She was now in the height of her fame and popularity. Peg even set up a grand carriage, powdered lacqueys, and the lavish surroundings of a woman of fashion. "But," says Whitelocke, in his "History of the Irish Stage," "to her honour be it ever remembered, that whilst thus in the zenith of her glory, courted and caressed by all ranks and degrees, it made no alteration in her behaviour—she remained the same gay, affable, good-natured Woffington she had ever been." She possessed the warm, impetuous character of her nation; the kind heart and ready hand of her profession, could never turn away from the tale of distress or refuse to help those who stood in need of help, to which may be added a crowning theatrical virtue—she was ever ready to play for a benefit, albeit that of the lowest performer on the stage. Before Peg gave a thought to an establishment of her own, she had at the outset of her career placed her mother in a comfortable position for life. The old lady was a most devout Catholic, so it is to be hoped knew nothing of her daughter's peccadilloes. For many years she might be seen in Dublin, attired in a long black velvet mantle, and carrying a gold snuff-box and prayer-book in her hands. Nor did Peg forget her sister, who was sent off to a French convent, there to enjoy the advantages which she had so terribly missed. Polly Woffington afterwards became the Honourable Mrs. Cholmondeley. Peg endeavoured by every means in her power to remedy her own early want of education, studying for a time in Paris under the famous Mademoiselle Dumesnil.

That she was unusually successful is apparent from many of her letters still extant, as well as the records of her histrionic displays. In none of the criticisms of the time do we find the slightest allusion made to any educational defect, a drawback which would have only been too gladly seized upon by her enemies, for, like all successful people, she had many. So true is it "that if a woman finds her own good fortune difficult to bear, her friends find it still harder to bear for her," which saying reminds me it was about this time those dazzling meteors of penniless beauty, Maria and Elizabeth Gunning, swept across the path of Peg with little more than a "Thank you, ma'am," for the magnificent Court dresses given them by the actress, wherein to make their curtsies at Dublin Castle, their first trial in the race for rank and wealth, in which these two outsiders carried off such heavy stakes—an earl and a duke's coronet!

Meanwhile there had been growing a marked coolness between Peg and Garrick, though the lady put forth all her seductions to keep her lover, forgetting that when passion has once cooled it is easier to create a new one than to restore the past. His marriage with Violetta, the dancer, gave the apparent key to his fickleness, if any is needed to account for change in a man. She was a Viennese, young, accomplished, and virtuous even as a *ballerina*, besides possessing £6,000 and a well-filled jewel-case. Peg, no doubt, felt this desertion more deeply than she would ever allow, though 'tis the usual fate of women in her sad position. She, however, found the public still faithful to their old favourite, crowded and aristocratic audiences nightly doing homage to her talent. Yet we read that soon after her last return to London in 1756, a visible change took place in the demeanour of the Irish actress. A cloud seemed to overshadow her hitherto exuberant spirits, her health gave signs of decay, a serious internal complaint having declared itself, while a stray visit to a church in the metropolis completed the transformation. She entered the sacred edifice merely from motives of curiosity, but remained to listen, to wonder and to tremble, as the great truths of eternity were launched forth by the eloquent tongue of some earnest preacher.

Viewed in such a clear, searching light, her past life filled her with terror and remorse, a fixed resolution to become a different woman was made on the spot, but as she showed no inclination to quit the stage, it may be doubted if her conversion could yet be called *thorough*, for in a case like hers no possible alternative remained. She used to say, "I will never destroy my own reputation by clinging to the shadow after the substance is gone. When I can no longer bound on the boards with elastic step, and when the enthusiasm of the public begins to show symptoms of change, that night will be the last appearance of Margaret Woffington." "That night" came sooner than she expected, though the public had not tired nor her admirers changed, a night which would have seemed a sad termination to her brilliant career, had it not broken into a better and brighter day.

On the 3rd of May, 1757, she appeared as Rosalind in "As you like it," and her name was announced in the same playbill for several nights to follow; but alas for human foresight! Wilkinson, in his memoirs, gives a graphic account of this, Peg's last appearance on the stage. He was standing at the wing as she went on with Mrs. Pritchard, who acted Celia.

"She got through four acts," he writes, "without my perceiving she was in the least indisposed; but in the fifth she complained of illness. When she came off at the quick change of dress and got accoutred she returned to finish her part and pronounce in the epilogue speech, 'If it be true that good wine needs no bush, it is as true that a good play needs no epilogue,' &c., &c. But when arrived at 'If I were among you I would kiss as many of you as had beards that pleased me,' her voice broke, she faltered, endeavoured to go on, but could not; then in a voice of tremor screamed, 'O God, O God!' tottered to the stage-door, speechless, where she was caught. The audience, of course, applauded until she was out of sight, and then sunk into awful looks of astonishment—both young and old, before and behind the curtain—to see one of the most handsome women of the age, a favourite actress, and who had for several seasons given high entertainment, struck so suddenly by the hand of Death, in such a situation of time and place, and in her prime of life, being then only thirty-seven years old."

Thus did the curtain descend for ever upon the stage career of Peg Woffington, an awful lesson of worldly vanity, which needs no teaching and was fully understood by the now sincerely repentant woman, whom a few months later we find at Teddington, scarcely recognisable as the fair and frail actress of bygone days. Day by day she might be seen in her village home, conspicuous only by her humble demeanour, her countless deeds of charity, her gentle works of love amongst her poorer brethren, causing many a one "to rise up and call her blessed." The world, of course, ridiculed this striking change in one of its votaries; but Peg heard little of the world's opinions, and cared less. From "that night" all her old career had vanished as quickly as a stage pageant; nothing now remained but the last act, when the curtain of Death fell softly and solemnly upon the closing scene of the life of Peg Woffington. She was buried in a vault beneath the parish church at Teddington. A tablet on the wall bears the following inscription:—

"Near this monument lies the body of MARGARET WOFFINGTON, born October 18th, 1720; who departed this life March 28th, 1760, aged 39."

Thus passed away the once celebrated actress.

We have no desire to gloss over her faults, or to elevate her into a heroine of virtue. The only object has been to present her as she really was—a guilty but repentant woman, to whom due allowance must be made for her Celtic temperament, her early training, and later surroundings; one who, nevertheless, possessed brilliant talents, a noble disposition, and a loving heart.

"Forgive her," says Murphy, in his "Life of Garrick," "one female error, and it might be fairly said of her that she was adorned with most virtues; honour, truth, benevolence, and charity were her distinguishing characteristics." "We know what we are, but we know not what we may be," exclaims Ophelia. With this thought present, let us not cast a stone at the memory of poor Peg Woffington, but rather lay a flower of pity upon her lonely grave as we breathe forth the beautiful aspiration of her country's faith—*Requiescat in pace.*

FANNY POWER COBBE.



THE FACE IN THE GLASS.

A Tale of All Hallows Eve.

By ALICE EVÉZARD.

CHAPTER IV.

My sleep that night was disturbed by uneasy dreams; the face I had seen in the library seemed always coming between Maurice and myself, with its mocking smile and the basilisk glare in the fierce black eyes. I woke in the morning weary and unrefreshed. Maud told the story of my loss at the breakfast-table, and Mr. Livingston exclaimed at once that we ought to have detectives down from London and search the thing out thoroughly, but I protested eagerly against it, and Maud, Mary, and Grace, and indeed Oliver and Maurice, too, sided with me. Maud, "because," she said, "it would be so undignified to have the whole story of our innocent All Hallows Eve amusement in the local paper;" and the others for my sake, because they felt that it would be particularly unpleasant for me, my own motive for wishing no one to know of the affair I kept to myself, but it was really an indefinable dread of some evil happening to Maurice. Notwithstanding Mrs. Wynne's kind entreaties, I determined to go home as soon as I could, for I wanted to be alone; and, much as I loved Maud and the rest, I could hardly bear the irrepressible spirits that with Maud and Oliver found their expression in a badinage, which, to my excited fancy, seemed almost unkind. Maurice heard me-

say I must go home, and he volunteered to drive me there in the pony carriage.

Last night's storm had cleared off, the morning was sunny and clear, the wind had dried the ground, and everything looked bright and cheerful. Maurice was very grave as he stood waiting to put me into the carriage, whilst I lingered to say goodbye to Oliver and Maud, who had come out on the steps to see us off. It was as much as the groom could do to hold the spirited little ponies while Maurice helped me in and took his place beside me, but I did not mind any danger which came in tangible shape, and I think I should have enjoyed the excitement if the little creatures had run away. They did not attempt it, however, and as we drove down the avenue and out of the great gates into the high road, their spirits subsided to a brisk trot.

"I am determined to fathom this affair, Judith," said Maurice, as the ponies sobered down and left him time to speak. "I wish you could give me some description of the man, which would enable me to recognise him."

"I think he was a gentleman," I began hesitatingly.

"A gentleman," muttered Maurice between his teeth, "what kind of gentleman, I wonder, to find amusement in frightening an innocent girl."

"Well, it is difficult to explain, Maurice, I mean he was not a man who seemed to be in want, he was in the position of a gentleman evidently, and could have had no motive of gain for his theft."

"I am very sorry you have lost your mother's locket," said Maurice slowly, almost in the same words that Maud had used the night before, "but of course you did not care for that foolish little ring."

"The ring Maud gave me," I interrupted quickly; "I beg your pardon, I valued it very much. It is the only ring I have ever worn."

"The ring Maud gave you," repeated Maurice, "yes, I had forgotten she gave it to you."

"No," I retorted sharply, provoked beyond endurance, and angry with him, with Maud, and with myself above all for having made a foolish speech which I knew to be false,

"No, you gave it to me, but I suppose you have repented it, as you are glad it is lost."

Maurice turned to me with one of his winning smiles.

"Will you let me replace it?" he said in a low tone.

But I did not feel inclined to be gracious; I answered shortly and coldly (all the more coldly because I really cared for him, and feared lest he should guess it).

"No, thank you, I should not care for another."

He bit his lips, but said nothing, and we drove on in silence until we reached the entrance of my father's grounds, and then, as we drove up the avenue, Maurice said quietly—

"I am afraid I offended you, Judith, but you must forgive me; I forget sometimes that you are no longer a child, and that the girl of eighteen might resent the expression of friendship which seemed natural to the child of ten. I will be more careful in future, and remember how little I am to you. Have you forgiven my presumption?"

"You had better give Grace a ring; she told me, the other day, she should like one like mine," I cried, in an outburst of childish petulance and jealousy, an entirely unreasonable jealousy too, for which I had no grounds (except that Maurice had, once or twice lately, challenged Grace to a game of chess, and left me to look on; but I knew that everybody at Carlton Hall made it a kind of duty to amuse poor Grace, who was a very delicate, ailing girl, so this was no excuse). I felt thoroughly ashamed of myself when I saw Maurice's surprised look, but there was no time for him to reply, for the carriage had reached the hall steps, and the groom was already holding the ponies, who objected to stand still. Maurice helped me out in perfect silence. I said faintly (with an uncomfortable consciousness of the hot blush which my own speech had brought to my face)—

"Won't you come in?"

But he shook his head, and with a hasty "goodbye," he drove off.

I was greeted by a cold "Good morning" from my father, and "You are early, Judith," from my stepmother, as I entered the library, where they usually sat in the morning; and then I retreated to my own room, where a very different

welcome awaited me from my old nurse, who was now my maid. I told her the story of the evening before, and it was a comfort to have her warm sympathy and to hear her honest indignation against the author of my trouble and fright ; but I asked her to be silent about the matter, for I felt ashamed of my foolish adventure, and I also had an unreasoning fear of some harm coming to Maurice through me, for I knew he would not rest until he had punished the man who had frightened me (if, indeed, it had not been an evil spirit,) and had made him an enemy.

" Did the mistress tell you that her brother had arrived, Miss Judith ? " asked Sarah. " You know she expected him last week, but he could not come ; and late last night he came on foot. The carriage he took at Woodthorpe broke down—it was a crazy old fly from the 'George'—and a bad road you know, miss, it is from the town. So Captain Chester had to walk, and he lost his way ; however, he got here at last. He's not a bit like the mistress ; but he's dark and handsome and a pleasant gentleman too. I wonder the mistress did not tell you, miss."

" She does not often say much to me, Sarah," I said, sadly. " She did say once that her brother was coming home on leave from the West Indies, and that she should be glad to see him, for they had not met for many years ; but she said nothing about it just now."

" Well, miss, I have never seen her so lively as she was last night. She seemed like a different creature, so cold and quiet as she generally is. Captain Chester had to go to Woodthorpe directly after breakfast about his luggage, but he will be home to dinner I heard him say."

When I went back to the library Mrs. Sylvester condescended to inform me of her brother's arrival, and that he was going to stay a fortnight in the house, and she added—

" I hope, Judith, you will try and make yourself agreeable to him, or he will find it very dull. You are generally so reserved and quiet that you might as well not be here at all."

This from my proud, silent stepmother ! I was surprised, for if I was reserved she was ten times more so ; but I said

nothing, and she seemed to expect no answer, and asked me how I had enjoyed my evening at the Hall, &c. She had not talked so much or noticed me since she married my father five years before, and I grew more and more surprised. It seemed as if this brother's visit would work a change in our monotonous life. Well, I was thankful for any kindness from my stepmother, whom I had been trying to thaw without success for the last few years, and I warmly seconded her efforts at conversation.

CHAPTER V.

CAPTAIN CHESTER came in just before the dinner-hour ; but he went straight to his room to dress for dinner, and I did not see him then. When I went to my room I found that Sarah had laid out for me the same dress I had worn at Carlton Hall the night before—a pale sea-green silk, cut square (like the bodices in old pictures), and trimmed with soft white lace. As I was standing before my glass, fastening a late white rose in my dress, I realised that I was dressed exactly as I had been in the library at Carlton, and I shuddered.

"Sarah, why did you pick out this particular dress ?" I said. "I did not want to wear it again until I had forgotten my uncomfortable associations with it."

"You always look best in green, Miss Judith, and I want you to look well to-night, and there is no time to change now, for it is just dinner-time, and master's so particular."

I said no more, and went down to the drawing-room.

My father and Mrs. Sylvester had not come down yet, and the room was dark, except for the uncertain flickering of the fire. I thought the room was empty, and I sat down in a low chair by the fireplace, when a very pleasant voice from the other side of the room said—

"I see I must introduce myself, Miss Sylvester. Will

you allow your stepmother's brother to claim your welcome?"

"Captain Chester?" I said, rising from my place.

"Yes;" he answered, coming forward to the rug; "I hope——"

The fire blazed up just then and shone full on his face. The clear-cut, handsome features, the black hair, and the dark moustache were all the same. It was the face I had seen in the library the night before—the face that had looked over my shoulder in the glass. I felt that I turned white; I saw it in Captain Chester's face before he sprang forward and said—

"You are ill, Miss Sylvester; let me ring for assistance."

"No, no;" I said with difficulty. "Oh, why did you frighten me so last night? What brought you into the library?"

"Into the library?" he said, and he smiled; "why, I have not been into the library at all yet, Miss Sylvester. You must be dreaming!"

"No, I am not dreaming, Captain Chester," I returned. "I did see you last night in the library at Carlton Hall, and you know best what was your motive for being there."

"This is very strange, Miss Sylvester," he said, half-smiling; "and really I am at a loss to understand you. I may well be puzzled when a young lady, whose acquaintance I make to-night for the first time, accuses me of having frightened her the night before. All Hallows' Eve too, of all nights in the year!"

"You cannot convince me to the contrary, Captain Chester," I said; "I am sure I saw you."

"It must have been my ghost," he said, with the same smile (how different to the one he had worn the night before). "This is really becoming serious, Miss Sylvester. Where did you see me—in the glass, did you say? Do you know the old saying——"

I interrupted him very shortly—"I said nothing about a looking-glass, Captain Chester. You have betrayed yourself. Perhaps, now that you have mystified me sufficiently, you will kindly restore my ring and locket?"

His face changed, and he put on the same mocking smile of the night before which made me shudder.

"Did you not mention the glass?" he said, lightly. "I thought you did. But I do not want to quarrel on this the first night of our acquaintance. Why will you persist in this fancy? Believe me, you saw someone who resembled me, but you did not see me. Let me advise you, Miss Sylvester, not to mention this story to anyone; it would be an unwise thing to do, and it sounds so improbable."

Captain Chester said this with such a fatherly air of wisdom that I felt almost shaken in my belief, and asked myself if I could be mistaken; but then that slip about the glass?

I had no time to think it over then, for my father and my stepmother entered the room, and we all went down to dinner. Not a word did Captain Chester breathe of what I had just said, but he made himself thoroughly agreeable the whole evening, and in spite of myself, in spite of an inward conviction that he was playing some trick upon me, I could not help being fascinated by his manner. I sang an old ballad late in the evening, a ballad which I knew to have been a favourite of my mother's, and my father, with Captain Chester, stood by the piano, listening attentively. When I had finished, my father spoke abruptly—

"Judith, where is the locket you always wear, with your mother's hair in it?"

"I lost it last night, papa, when I——"

I stopped abruptly, for I felt Captain Chester's eyes on me; and, besides, I could not tell my father the story—it seemed so foolish.

"What was it like?" said Captain Chester coolly. "Do you know I found a locket on my way here yesterday?" And with the utmost assurance he drew my locket out of his pocket.

The audacity of his speech, and indeed of the whole thing, took my breath away, and when I recovered it my father was saying—

"Indeed, it was very careless of her. Judith, I thought you would have valued that locket too much to lose it. It

must have been carelessness. You must have tied the velvet loosely, for the ring is unbroken."

I took my locket back in perfect silence, for I knew not what to say; I felt like a creature in a snare, and of course my silence endorsed Captain Chester's falsehood. Later on in the evening, Mrs. Sylvester sang some of my father's favourite songs, and as he stood listening by her side, I retreated to a couch by the fire. Captain Chester followed me.

"Will you forgive me?" he said in a low voice. "I did not know that locket held your mother's hair, or I would not have taken it, you may be sure." He sat down beside me and went on, "The fact is, I lost my way coming here the other night, after that wretched fly had broken down, and I found myself wandering about without the least idea of my whereabouts. I was in some private grounds, I could see, although there seemed to be a right of way through them, and when I came (after much exploring) to find a door in what I could just make out to be an inner garden wall, I thought I would go in and up to the house and ask my way. Once in the garden, I saw a light—the light from the library window. I went up to it just in time to see you before the glass, and I could not resist the temptation of going in softly and looking over your shoulder. I meant to explain that I had lost my way, but your extreme fright and subsequent fainting prevented me, and then it struck me that if anyone came in I should be in a remarkably awkward position, and probably be taken up for a burglar. You remained insensible, and (forgive me for saying it), after seeing your face, I had such an unconquerable desire to see it again under more favourable circumstances, that I took your locket and ring, in the hope of finding out your identity by their means. The ring was not your mother's, for I see there is 'From M. to Judith' engraved inside, and the date is only eight years ago."

"Give it to me, please," I said coldly, for his impertinent assurance and cool disregard of truth had disgusted and provoked me beyond endurance.

"Nay, I have not half finished my story," he said depre-

catingly. "I had intended calling for assistance, but on second thoughts, as I told you, it seemed such an equivocal position to be found in, in a strange house ["I should think so indeed," I muttered, but he went on without attending] at that time of night, that I changed my mind; so I unlocked the library door and waited in the garden outside to see what would happen. I waited some time. At last your companions came in and carried you off—or rather, I should say, one of them did, for he would allow no one else to touch you."

He paused and looked at me, and I felt, with untold anger, that I blushed painfully. He went on—

"Well; now I suppose you are very angry, and I am going to make you more angry still. With your leave, I will keep this ring until you have fully and freely forgiven me for what was, after all, but the mad impulse of a moment."

"Not with my leave, Captain Chester."

"Without it then, Miss Sylvester. I know that for your own sake you will not mention this, because you would not like it to be said that the reserved Miss Sylvester could descend to such a childish amusement as attempting an All Hallows' Eve charm. For my part, I am somewhat superstitious, I confess, and it seems curious that my reflection should have been the one you saw. Well, who knows what may happen? Miss Sylvester, will you forgive me?"

"Never!" I said vehemently. "I can neither forget nor forgive such an insult, followed up, as it is, by an equally insulting apology."

"Then I fear I must keep the ring until you have changed your mind, for I could not possibly break my word."

"You are quite at liberty to act as dishonourably as you please about it, of course," I said coldly. "I have no power to make you give it up."

"Nay, Miss Sylvester, you are taking a foolish jest too seriously. Let us be friends."

He held out his hand, but I turned away in speechless indignation and joined the two at the piano, who had been too much absorbed in each other to notice our conversation. It seemed to me that the evening would never end. We had

always been early people, but Captain Chester's conversation and his endless stories of the West Indies seemed to fascinate my father, and it was very late before I at length reached my room. The first thing I did was to sit helplessly down in a chair and burst into tears, much to the discomfort of poor Sarah, who had seldom seen me give way before. I felt thoroughly unnerved, and a vague presentiment of coming evil overwhelmed me. I told the whole story to my dear old nurse, but neither she nor I could devise any means for getting back the ring. Of course, there was one way : I could tell Maurice; but I knew so well that he would be sure at least to knock Captain Chester down as the smallest punishment he could give him, that I dared not do it, for I would not for worlds have made Captain Chester Maurice's enemy. I could see what a vindictive nature lay under that mask of smiling indifference. I dreaded seeing the man again ; there was a horrible fascination in his large black eyes which I felt as one feels the fascination of a rattlesnake.

CHAPTER VI.

WEEKS went by, but still Captain Chester lingered at our house, and it was only too plain that his attraction was my unfortunate self. He had been introduced to all our friends, the Wynnes included, and everybody but the Wynnes had been charmed with him. He told the Wynnes his own version of his finding the locket, as he had before told my father ; and even as I did then, I stood silent while he told his neatly-arranged falsehood, but my motive was a different one : it was fear for Maurice that silenced me. I could see that Maurice was surprised at the story, and only half believed it. I knew, not only from his outspoken admiration and his deferential, almost tender, attention to my slightest wish, but from an instinctive intuition, that Captain Chester

wished to make me his wife. Whether he really cared for me or not I did not know, but I was heiress to a large fortune and he was a poor man, with nothing but his pay, and with very extravagant habits. Captain Chester had not seen the Wynnes three times, when I noticed that Maurice had very much changed. He seldom spoke to me ; he avoided all opportunities of meeting me, wherever it might be ; if I were invited to a party, it seemed a signal for him to refuse ; and his manner had grown strangely cold and distant. And I, what could I do ? What can any woman do in such circumstances but suffer in silence and hide her feelings as best she may.

Meanwhile, Captain Chester was growing more tiresome every day, and, evidently with his sister's hearty co-operation, he managed to be conspicuously attentive to me wherever I went. In vain I answered him shortly, refused to listen to his speeches, and tried to tire him out by my studied coldness ; he was quietly and coolly persistent, and no amount of discouragement on my part seemed to have the slightest effect upon him.

On New Year's Eve we were all invited to a large ball at the Wynnes'. It was an old custom of theirs to have a ball on that night, and I had always looked forward to it, but now I felt as if I dreaded it. Captain Chester was to be there, of course, and I knew too well that he would, as usual, pay me such marked attention that everyone would notice it. In anything but a happy mood, I stood before my looking-glass. My father had, with unwonted attention, chosen my dress, and it was, together with a very handsome set of pearls, his New Year's gift to me. It was a rich cream-coloured satin, trimmed with soft white lace, and I wore with it crimson flowers in my hair. I was dressed for the ball and waiting in the drawing-room for the others, when the servant brought in a bouquet of beautiful flowers and a note addressed to me.

"Dear Judith," it ran, "will you accept these few flowers, as you have always condescended to do in years gone by ? I feel that you may think it presumptuous of me to do it under existing circumstances ; but you must forgive the

presumption for the sake of old times. I hope and pray that you will be very happy, and that the new year may bring you every blessing this world can bestow.—Your old friend,

“MAURICE WYNNE.”

Aye, Maurice had always sent me flowers on New Year's Eve ever since we were children; but what did his letter mean? He spoke as if some change had taken place in our relations to each other. Was it, could it be, that he was going to marry Grace? But that would hardly be a reason for hoping I should be happy. A vague sense of something wrong came over me, and I gazed at the letter almost without seeing it. Captain Chester came into the room, and I hid it hurriedly in my dress before, I think, even his sharp eyes could have seen it.

“Ah, I am forestalled!” he said in a vexed tone, and he bit his lip angrily. “I sent to town for these, and they have only just arrived,” and he held out to me a bouquet of crimson and white flowers.

“I am sorry you took that trouble,” I said coldly, “for I should not have accepted them in any case.”

“You are very cruel, Miss Sylvester,” he said, roused at last from his usual cool assurance. “I have done everything to try and please you for the last two months, and I cannot succeed. Why are you so unkind?”

“You best know the reason,” I replied. “You have stolen my ring and insulted me afterwards. I do not see that anything else is needed.”

“Nay, Miss Sylvester, be frank. If Mr. Maurice Wynne had not sent you those flowers, you would not so angrily have rejected mine; but you shall show me some little politeness, for if you refuse to dance with me this evening [“Ah!” as I started involuntarily, “I knew you meant to do it”] I will open Mr. Sylvester's eyes this very night. Remember that Mr. Maurice is a younger son, and Mr. Sylvester's heiress ought to make a better match than that.”

(*To be continued.*)



A SONG OF THE SEA.

(Written, by special request, for the late Mdlle. THERESE TIETJENS.)

DARK and dismal is the day ;
The strong seas lash the snowy spray
Upon the shivering sand,
Black clouds are fleeting through the sky,
The solemn tempest seems to sigh
Of ruin o'er the land.

A fisher has dared the waters wild
On this dim and dreary day ;
A loving wife and little child
Gaze o'er the surging spray
For the tiny boat that sailed away
In the early morning grey ;
Hope gleams thro' the gloom in their dewy eyes
'Neath the hopeless skies.

And all through the long and weary hours
They gaze o'er the restless sea,
Till the dews of eve fall over the flowers,
And the sun steals silently
From the cloudy sky, as Hope from the breast
Of wild unrest.

Oh, strong was the heart that sailed away
O'er the seas to-day !
Oh, *still* is the heart that returns no more
To the welcome shore !
And the helpless mother weeps in vain,
For her hopes are sunk in the sounding main !

* * * * *

Yet the face of the fisher smiles far away
From the evening grey,
For he stands in the Dawn of Eternity,
With a wondering eye ;
And by the shores of the Silent Sea,
O mother, he waits thy child and thee !

DAVID R. WILLIAMSON,





OLLA PODRIDA.

SHE Naval Inspection by Her Majesty, at Spithead, passed off without an accident, muchly to the astonishment and agreeable disappointment of the Admiralty. The reason why, however, is plain. The unwieldy Leviathans were not manœuvred. Had they been we no doubt should have heard of half the squadron having gone down to look at the "Vanguard." The show would, doubtless, have been more complete had the evolutions taken place ; but then, John Bull's boats cost a mint of money, and are not to be played with, or like a mermaid they take a header, and "never say a word to nobody." At them "you may look, but mustn't touch."

Speculation as to the naval battles of the future leads us to infer that the great point of the combatants will be to get the enemy to work about in order to sink them. In the effort, they will ram one another to the bottom, and the side which has the last ship left will be the conqueror !

After reading the following, who will dare assert that British seamanship is a thing of the past :—On the 14th inst., Her Majesty's Ship, 'Lively,' in going out of Cowes harbour, ran foul of the Queen's Yacht, 'Alberta,' damaging her bows and carrying away a great portion of her bulwarks. Proceeding gaily on her way, the lively

‘Lively’ then ran down and sank a small yacht belonging to Mr. Arthur White, to that loyal subject’s intense gratification. Not seeing anything else within sinking distance, the ‘Lively,’ much after the manner of a murderer, who, after surveying his victims, commits suicide, ran herself ashore. Here the record of her exploits draws to a close, but the question naturally arises, was Prince Leiningen in command of this interesting craft? If not, why not, or how otherwise?

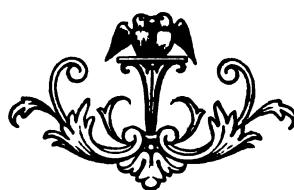
Since writing the above we learn that the “Lively” has again got into trouble. On the 17th inst. she, getting tired of doing nothing, got off the shore, and slyly collided a small boat belonging to one of the ships at Spithead. We hear upon very good authority that the “Lively” is to be re-christened the “Deadly.”

Sitting in our editorial sanctum we often clasp our hands, expose the whites of our eyes, and, like the Pharisee of yore, express our satisfaction that we are not as others are, no, not even as the editors of the inky *Telegraph*, and pinky *Globe*. The former journal has gone wrong in its horological department. Describing, in a leading article, the Lords’ and Commons’ Swimming Match for the edification of the largest circulation in the world, the *Tele-* thusseth—“The race lasted an hour *and sixty minutes*, in the course of which,” &c. The italics are ours, the statement the *Telegraph*’s; and now, in all ignorance and humility we ask how many minutes there are to the hour in Peterborough Court? Perhaps the race was so fast that the editor counted nineteen to the dozen!

Sixty minutes constitute not only an hour, it makes, also, a degree; but the *Globe* out-herods the *Telegraph* by many degrees. We like our *Globe*, it is intensely gratify-

ing for us to have our pink contemporary in a railway carriage, while our fellow travellers hold the jaundiced *Echo*—it satisfies our egotism, and asserts our superiority, and all for the outlay of an extra halfpenny per diem. Such a badge of respectability is cheap at the price. Further than this, the *Globe* reviews and criticises the *St. James's*. We, therefore, claim to be allowed to review our reviewer. Speaking, typographically of course, of the recent Violet Powder poisoning case, it states—"The packets were labelled on the outside: 'For the nursery, superior *Violet Powder*, warranted free from grit.'" O! ye paper of pink, such powders of *Violet*, our feelings *Violet*—ahem, *Violate*!

We are authorised to contradict the rumour that the talented composer of "The Campbells are Coming" is engaged upon a companion composition, to be entitled "The Campbells are Going"—presumably, we suppose, to Canada. The report, we believe, originated in the fact of a certain Noble Marquis having accepted a situation as country traveller, on commission and salary, in Canada, for his relatives, the eminent firm of Campbell Brothers, Wholesale Tea Merchants, London.



St. James's Magazine.

OCTOBER, 1878.

MARTINDALE'S MONEY

A NOVEL.

By the Author of "Old as the Hills," "Kate Savage," &c., &c.

CHAPTER XVIII.

A STORMY INTERVIEW.

TWO persons approaching each other in the broad avenue of Blatherwick Park might well have passed without brushing elbows. There was abundance of space. But a host owes a certain amount of consideration to the stranger within his gates, however unwelcome a visitor he may be. Hence, in spite of what had occurred on the previous night, and notwithstanding his sincere wish for the Major's departure, Martindale felt constrained to say something of a semi-civil description as the distance between himself and his guest became narrowed. There was, too, a nameless something in the Major's manner or gait which arrested his attention. Perhaps he was instinctively suspicious; at any rate the impression which sprang up in his mind, that Major Munns wanted to give him a wide berth at that moment, only induced him to defeat any such intention, presuming it to have existed.

"You must have had a cold drive," he said, halting in a leisurely way and taking his cigar from between his lips.

"Yes, deucedly cold," assented the other, in a surly tone.

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"We shall have snow before long, I fancy."

"Very likely," was the brief reply.

"By the way," said Martindale, "you were coming down stairs again last night, or rather this morning. Did you want to speak to me?"

"What do you mean?"

"I mean that I saw you coming out of your room between one and two o'clock this morning, and that you shut the door when you saw that I was coming upstairs."

"I looked out. I thought I heard a noise," said the Major confusedly, then recollecting that this assertion would appear inconsistent with what might follow, he added, "Possibly I *was* coming down to speak to you; if so, I changed my mind. I thought I wouldn't trouble you at such a time as that."

This appeared to Martindale to be a reluctant admission that he had intended renewing his request for the loan which had been previously refused to him, and to the rankling feeling which that refusal had probably left behind he immediately attributed the Major's present somewhat peculiar manner. Reasoning thus, he became a little ashamed of the vague suspicions which had sprung up in his mind, and a mixed impulse of generosity and yet of self-interest stirred within him. He hesitated for a moment, and then spoke again.

"I am afraid," he said, trying to revive the light of his cigar between his sentences; "I am afraid that I was rather uncivil last night, but the fact was I was rather out of sorts and upset by one thing and another. So far as that small sum is concerned, you will be welcome to it, and I really shall not feel justified in keeping you down here about my affairs any longer. You must go back to town and attend to your own interests. If you will come to my room presently, I will write you a cheque."

"Thank you," said the Major shortly, in answer to this little speech, "but fortunately I am not now in need of the money."

"Then that is not what you were coming downstairs about when I saw you?"

"No; it was not. I do not give a man an opportunity of refusing me twice."

"Then, pray, what was it you were going to say?"

The Major gave a short laugh. "It is a pity you did not continue your studies and go to the bar, with your apparent taste for cross-examination," he replied. "One would imagine that it was high treason to look out upon the staircase after going to bed."

"I should have said nothing about it," returned George calmly, "but that you told me just now you were coming to speak to me."

"I had no idea you were so suspicious," said Major Munns with a sneer. "You may be surprised to hear that even if I did think of taking the trouble to come downstairs to you again, it was upon a matter of more importance to yourself than to me."

"Then perhaps you will favour me with the communication now?"

"I prefer to choose my own time."

"Look here, Major," said George, changing his tone, "we had better understand each other. Be good enough to tell me what you mean."

"As I have already said, I will choose my own time, and I may add that I shall choose my own place too. I am not inclined to stand out in this infernally cold avenue any longer."

The man had a vile and intolerant temper, and he had gradually allowed his manner to become much more offensive than in his wiser moments he would have deemed expedient.

His insolent tone greatly disposed the younger man whom he addressed to catch him by the neck and shake him. The operation would have relieved Martindale's feelings vastly, and might have served as a safety valve for much accumulated irritation with regard to various matters quite irrespective of the point immediately at issue. It was not without effort that he controlled the rising inclination; even then he felt that some such summary process might yet be necessary, and he had the agreeable knowledge that he was equal to the task,

if it eventually should be forced upon him. It is always excellent to have the giant's strength, whatever may be said about putting it into action.

The Major, who was certainly by a head and shoulders the shorter of the two, took a step backwards. Perhaps he observed the rather threatening glance which was directed towards him.

"If you imagine," said George, speaking still with tolerable calmness, "that I am going to put up with that kind of language from you, you are very much mistaken. That style of thing will not serve your purpose beyond the limits of your family circle. Once more I tell you that I mean to have an explanation of all this. I am not fond of riddles."

"I am afraid you are not wise in being so persistent," retorted Major Munns, "but since you are particularly anxious to know what I had to say to you last night, I don't mind telling you that it was something affecting your position here and your property."

It had become so dark beneath the trees that the speaker could not see the effect which this answer produced upon his questioner, nor could he see that he had a second hearer in the person of the lodge-keeper, who, attracted by the voices, which had been unconsciously raised during the latter part of the discussion, had crept near behind the trees, and was now a much interested looker-on.

"I confess," said Martindale, speaking after a moment's pause, "that I don't understand what you can have to do with my position here or my property."

The Major answered nothing, and the other added—

"And I am not likely to put up with any interference with regard to either."

"The interference may come in such a form that you will be obliged to put up with it."

"From whom—from Major Munns?"

"Possibly through my instrumentality and from the duty I have to discharge to others."

"You are becoming doubly mysterious," said Martindale, with an air of carelessness which was not entirely natural at

the moment. "Would not it be better to speak in plain English, if indeed there is anything to speak about."

"As I said just now," was the answer, "I shall choose my own time and place. If necessary, I could prove to you that there is something to speak about."

"Then why not say it out like an honest man?"

"I don't know that I am dishonest because I refuse to comply with your wishes."

"It is essentially dishonest to put forward vague threats and suggestions, and then refuse, when asked, to put them into plain and intelligible language."

"Nevertheless, and in spite of your complimentary observations, I shall decline to move in the matter until I have been properly advised."

"In other words, you make a statement and then have not the courage or the means to verify it. In the one case you must be a coward, and in the other a scoundrel."

"You may live to be sorry that you have said such words as those to me," cried the other, trembling with passion. "I am not at all afraid to tell you what I have discovered when the proper time comes, and as to the means of proving what I say, I have them here." And thus speaking, the Major, still shaking with rage, dragged a leathern pocket-book out of his breast coat pocket, and rapped it fiercely.

Martindale had only just time to make out what it was before it was quickly returned to its former place of security, but Gill, the unseen observer, was in a better position: the light from the lamp in the lodge-window happened to fall upon it, and enabled him, even in that short glimpse, to note its features.

"Documentary evidence, I presume," said George, in a cynical tone, from which, nevertheless, a certain uneasiness could not be banished altogether.

"Precisely," returned the Major, with more calmness.

There was a pause. Then Martindale spoke with a great show of firmness.

"I am busy just now in various ways," he said, "but I will find time to explode this mare's nest. You have given me to understand, after a good deal of beating about the

bush, that you have in your pocket-book some paper or other which affects me or my interests. How you came by it I won't at present inquire ; but unless, within twenty-four hours from the present time, you satisfy my requirements, I also shall be advised in the matter. I believe the law generally knows how to deal with impostors, however ingenious and inventive they may be."

He tossed his cigar amongst the trees as he ended, and turned on his heel towards the lodge-gates.

With his mind full of anger and doubt, he passed the gates and strode out into the road. Then it occurred to him that though Major Munns was not entitled to much courtesy at his hands, yet that Mrs. Munns had not offended, except in the accident of being the Major's wife. So he turned back to the lodge, which Gill had just had time to regain unobserved. Here he wrote a pencilled note to his lady guest, informing her that he could not return by the dinner-hour that evening, and begging her in effect to proceed with that meal and command the services of the establishment. Having done this, and directed Gill to take the note to the house, he went out again and walked in the direction of the Cedars, without noticing the curious and watchful expression upon his lodge-keeper's face.

Gill turned the note over reflectively when his employer had gone. He did not suppose that it contained anything important, since it was addressed to Mrs. Munns, yet he regarded it with interest as the outcome of the altercation which he had just witnessed in the avenue. Thought was a rather laborious process to this man, and he was surprised presently to find how many minutes had elapsed since he had commenced staring at the outside of the note. He felt that longer gazing would not materially assist him, so he started off to the house in obedience to orders. The wind was rising as night closed in, and the park was full of cold blasts and mournful sounds.

"A nasty night," thought Gill, pressing his hat upon his head. "Puts me in mind of last year, when the old guv'nor died. P'raps we're going to change owners again. If we do, I'll change too. I've had enough of this here. I'd like

to get a tidy bit of money and make a start with something new."

Pursuing this train of thought he reached the servants' entrance at the rear of the house.

" You're to give this to the lady," he said to a maid, who was the first domestic whom he happened to meet. The maid took it and asked him if he wouldn't wait a few minutes and see if there were an answer to be sent.

Gill knew pretty well that there would be no answer, but he was not unwilling to accept the invitation to wait. Through a glass door he caught a glimpse of a splendid fire burning in the room used as a sort of servants' hall, and also observed preparations for a substantial supper. He wanted, too, having once tasted of a knowledge which did not concern him, to learn something more as to what was going on in his master's household, or, to adopt the phrase which occurred to him at the moment, "to find out what was in the wind."

He went in therefore, and was made welcome by those of the other servants who happened to be unoccupied at the time.

He was a single man, and as such a person of consideration in the eyes of the female domestics. In their society he became *Mr.* Gill, and found that such witticisms as he chose to indulge in were always received with ready giggles. The certainty of having your sallies well received is naturally encouraging, and in the general way the lodge-keeper found plenty to say for himself. But to-night he sat silent and unresponsive to the smiles of the maids, although he devoured with appetite such viands as they placed before him. His mind was, in fact, revolving weightier things than jokes, and the only subjects of discussion which interested him were such as related to the visitors upstairs. The servants themselves were evidently very little interested in them. It was mentioned incidentally that the Major was looking as black as thunder, that Mrs. Munns had been weeping, and that it was to be hoped the house would be a little more cheerful after the approaching marriage. This was nearly all that was said on the subject, and Gill



digested these small items of information whilst he also disposed of a large quantity of cold meat and ale.

After the meal he sat and smoked so thoughtfully as to raise the comment that "he was not himself to-night." Even this did not arouse him from his apparent apathy.

"Why, you look as if you were planning out something dreadful, I declare you do!" cried the young person who had invited him to wait for an answer to the note.

"Never mind me and my looks, my dear," said the lodge-keeper, glancing up with a start.

"I don't," was the pert response.

But Gill would not keep the ball rolling. Presently his entertainers gave him up as hopeless for the time being, and ceased to press him to more food and drink. Then he finished his pipe, and with a "Good night, all," went to his solitary home by the park-gates to follow out his train of thought undisturbed.



CHAPTER XIX.

PATERNAL WARNINGS.

BUT for recent occurrences, George Martindale would not have paid a visit to his lady-love on this particular evening. He was induced to do so, not by any newly-awakened yearning for her presence or sympathy, but rather by a wish to avoid his own house and its temporary inmates, or at least one of them.

The Hawkleys had just finished dinner when he reached The Cedars. The Colonel had gone to his own particular room (made sacred by the much-abused name of "study"), and Miss Hawley was in the drawing-room alone.

Coming from the keen atmosphere out of doors, Martindale found the room almost oppressive; there was a blaze of wax candles, and the air was heavy with the fumes of a lamp which supplemented these illuminations. The

curtains were closely drawn, and a huge fire burned in the grate, before which Julia sat, her feet upon the fender, and her handsome face looking upwards at the ceiling with an expression of anxiety. There was an open book of fashions upon her lap, which she put from her with a sigh as her lover entered the room. There was no eager hastening to welcome him ; she still kept her toes upon the fender, and graciously permitted him to kiss her forehead. George did not expect anything more demonstrative on her part, and yet this calm mode of receiving him jarred upon his feelings at the moment.

He sat down a long distance from the fire—in fact, so far away that it attracted Julia's attention.

" You look out of sorts, *mon cher* ; and why are you sitting out in the cold ? " she said, rousing herself slightly from her semi-recumbent position.

" I don't find it in the least cold : the room is like an oven," was the answer.

" I think an oven is a very good sort of place this weather. I detest the cold," she returned, with an artificial shiver. " It is impossible to be cold and good-tempered at the same time. Don't you think so ? "

" I have not thought much about it."

" You, at any rate, are not amiable to-night, whether it is due to the weather or not. What has gone wrong ? "

" Ask, rather, what has gone right ? " he said, moving restlessly from his chair to the piano-stool, where he sat, and endeavoured to pick out " God save the Queen " with one finger.

" You don't mean that you are going to lose the election ? " cried Julia, with sudden and real concern.

" Why ? " asked George ; " are you greatly interested in the matter ? "

" Of course I am."

" You sincerely wish for my success in the political world ? "

" I don't know much about the political world ; but I want you to be a member of Parliament. Do you think you are not going to win ? "

" I am sure I cannot tell. It is of no use to guess ; we

shall soon know. In the meantime, all my people are kind enough to tell me I am safe; and Peckham's people, I believe, tell him he is safe; so that there is probably a mistake somewhere. We cannot both very well be at the head of the poll."

"It must be horrid to be beaten," said Julia, reflectively.

"Yes, nothing succeeds like success. I fancy," he added, "that you would not do for the wife of an unsuccessful man."

No answer.

"Nor for a poor man's wife."

No answer.

He gave up the attempt at finishing the National Anthem, and came over suddenly to the fireplace.

"Suppose, for instance, that I fall through over this election business, and suppose, in addition, I were to find out suddenly that I should be just as poor a month hence as I was a year ago, what should you say to all that?"

"I really don't know," said Julia, crossly; "and I cannot see why you should conjure up such unpleasant things. What is the good of 'supposing' about anything?"

"Suppositions sometimes become realities. The great majority of people have to put up with what you call unpleasant things."

"Don't you call them unpleasant, then?" she demanded, rather tartly.

"Of course. It would not be well for husband and wife to have different tastes, would it?"

Julia was again silent. The conversation had produced a sort of vague uneasiness. She felt more satisfied the next moment, when her betrothed sat down upon a low chair beside her and took her white, well-shaped hand in his.

"A pretty hand, Julia!" She shrugged her shoulders in very mild depreciation of the compliment. "A hand to lie folded in the other, or to be encased in delicate kid, or decorated with splendid rings. Fancy such a hand helping to earn a living! It is profanity!"

"I don't pretend to be a very useful member of society. There is nothing I should dislike so much as to be what people call an 'excellent person,'" she said, with dignity.

" As long as you possess charms and graces of person you are content, then ? "

" I am as contented as most people are ; at all events, I am not so fond of imagining other conditions of things as you appear to be."

Martindale laughed, but not in a very jovial way.

" I don't know that I am fond of doing so ; but we never know what the future may hold. What are your ideas about the future ? "

" It is sufficient to have sensible ideas about the present," replied Julia, still rather crossly, for she more and more disliked her lover's style of conversation to-night.

" Well, perhaps you are right." And then, with a change, " I wish you would play to me and sing to me. I seem to want something to ' soothe the savage breast ' this evening."

He rose, and stood staring down into the coals ; whilst Julia, conforming more readily than she sometimes did, went to the piano. A woman with more tact or finer sympathies would have known how to choose a piece of music suited to her lover's mood. Such an one might have had an intuitive knowledge of what was wanted : she would have found something dreamy, tender, soothing. Not so Julia. She took the piece that first came to her hand—a piece with a good deal of alternate rattle and run ; brilliant, no doubt, but unacceptable to the listener in his then frame of mind. He listened through the first few bars, then gave himself up to moody reflections. He was thinking of the future. When Holy Church had forged the links, and they had been bound together, " for richer, for poorer," bound to love and to cherish, whether in sickness or in health, would they be as far apart, he wondered, as they seemed to be to-day ? If the heritage and gift of children should be theirs, what sort of mother would Julia prove to be ? Would she nurture and guard them as only a mother can, or leave them to the tender mercies of her servants ? What were her aim and wish in life ? To love and honour her husband and make a restful home for him ; to bring up his sons and daughters to be worthy men and true women, or simply to live in ease and comfort, to move through the world in softly cushioned

carriages, to dress in the height of the fashion and meet with the merited share of admiration in society? But, after all, what was the use of such questionings. He could bring no substantial accusation against his bride elect. She was much as other women are—too much, indeed. She could flirt better than she could love; she could please herself better than she could please other people. Thus, not for the first time, in a moment when her mere physical beauty held no sway over him, George Martindale owned to himself that the girl he was about to marry was not suited to him. He could not pour into her ears the doubts and fears which were now besetting his mind; he could not, in reliance upon a brave unselfish heart and deep affection, shake off the cares and anxieties of life, and snap his fingers at the future. With a sense of irritation he found himself comparing not for the first time the love which he knew Grace Sumner had given him with the strictly moderate affections of Julia Hawley. All unconscious of the reflections with which she had inspired her lover, Julia played through her piece with the utmost precision. As she finished, her father came in.

The Colonel started election topics, no doubt in the hope of interesting his visitor, but Martindale only gave vague answers, and presently rose and took his departure.

"Anything wrong between you two?" Colonel Hawley asked rather anxiously of his daughter.

"I know of nothing," replied Julia calmly.

Her father crossed one leg over the other with a sort of angry fling.

"You know of nothing!" he repeated. "You ought to make it your business to find out if there is anything. If you don't take care you will make a mistake yet with that indifferent way of yours. Men don't like that kind of manner, let me tell you."

"I really don't care papa what men do or do not like."

"Then you ought to care. We all ought to show some consideration for other people," said her father, rising suddenly to a high moral tone. "Besides," he added, descending to a lower level again, "it is all stuff and nonsense about not caring. A sensible girl does not throw

away her chances. Being engaged is not the same as being married. Martindale is a touchy sort of fellow, remember."

"This is not very edifying," said Julia, rising, "I will go to bed, I think."

"If you annoy your husband as much as you annoy your father by that manner of yours," said Colonel Hawley, "he will not have a very pleasant time of it."

"Thank you, papa, for your agreeable prognostications."

"Well, well," remarked her father, in a softened tone. "I don't want to quarrel with you. Be a good girl and don't make me angry. Only, mind, I am bent on there being no hitch about this marriage business."

"Why should there be a hitch?" demanded Julia.

"No reason that I know of except that nothing seems to go right."

"I suppose money matters have gone wrong, and that is why you are taking such a dismal view of things."

"Perhaps it is that," said Colonel Hawley ruefully. "The fact is I—I have had losses." (He did not mean to include the thirty pounds which had changed hands that afternoon, but the thought did occur to him at the moment).

"My investments have turned out badly in some cases. I have been taken in by two or three swindling companies, and then there is your cousin who has just come of age, and he wants his money."

"Well, papa, he can have it, I suppose?"

"Have it, oh yes, of course he can have it. He must have it; but these trust affairs are always troublesome, and I have had a nasty sort of letter from my co-trustee, who until now has generally left the management of everything in my hands."

"I don't see what all that has to do with me or my 'marriage business' as you call it," observed Julia after a pause.

"Of course you don't," returned her father, testily; "I ought to know by this time that you do not take much interest in your father's affairs, or make his interests your interests. Perhaps you may understand better when I tell

you that somehow or other I have spent, and you have helped me to spend, a great deal of money which I ought to have taken care of, and that most likely I shall have to sell this place and go away."

Julia was genuinely dismayed at what she heard. Until then she had had no idea that matters had reached such a stage.

"Well," observed the Colonel, rather satirically, "I am greatly obliged to you, my dear, for pressing me so eagerly to find a home with you and your husband in case I should become a wanderer."

Julia flushed a little. "Don't talk nonsense, papa. Surely it cannot be as bad as you are making out."

"Well, perhaps not quite so bad: but bad enough. I have been shamefully treated in one way and another."

There was a pause, during which father and daughter sat looking thoughtfully into the fire. Then Julia rose and said good-night.

"By-the-way," the Colonel said suddenly, "I found a letter from your old admirer, Sir Marcus, when I got home. He talks about coming down here when the elections are over. Perhaps that will be rather awkward, considering what will be going on. Shall I put him off?"

"No; I don't think you need put him off at present," replied Julia, thoughtfully. "He may as well be here." It crossed her mind that it would be well to have a title amongst the few guests who were to be present at the marriage ceremony—if indeed the worthy gentleman's recent bereavement would admit of his attendance. Julia was by no means an imaginative person, but she had already sketched out in her own mind the way in which the notice of the marriage would run in the *Times* and other papers: "On the — instant, at the Parish Church, Blatherwick, near Hexbury, by the Very Reverend the Dean of Hexbury, assisted by the Vicar, George Martindale, Esq., M.P., of Blatherwick Park, to Julia, only daughter of Colonel Hawkley, of The Cedars." Then no doubt the local papers would duly announce that amongst those present were Sir Marcus Gregory, M.P., &c., &c., and possibly one of the

weekly journals, devoted to the fashions and ladies' literature, would, upon receipt of the necessary particulars, describe her costume, and those of the bridesmaids, who were intended to be represented by two distant cousins who resided in London.

Julia never thought of her marriage without dwelling also upon these incidental features in connection with it. As she stood before her glass to-night she felt, for the first time since her betrothal, that perhaps these anticipations were not of a certainty to be realized. Her father's words had not been without effect upon her; and she began to see, even as he had seen, that her conduct had not been wise. It had not been out of any design or any dislike that she had treated her lover so coolly. It was simply that she was by nature apathetic, and had grown to regard the engagement as being like the laws of the Medes and Persians which may not be broken. She liked her lover well enough. He was young, well-looking, and, above all, well endowed with this world's goods, and likely, as she believed, to remain a rich man, in spite of his vague suggestions of this evening. Thinking of these things, and of the expediency of running no risk, Julia fell asleep, virtuously resolving to be more lover-like in the future.

CHAPTER XX.

TEMPTER AND TEMPTED.

It must be owned that Major Munns, in his calmer moments, lacked the qualifications for a bold and thorough-paced villain. He could conceive wickedness, but his knees shook a little when he set about accomplishing it. Save for the merest accident he would still have had it in his power to turn back, or at least to stand still, but the fact was, he had got out of his depth unawares, and his swimming powers were not such as to enable him to make for either shore with any

degree of confidence. Had he not in a moment of impetuosity and excitement been induced to look out of his bedroom door, just when Martindale was coming upstairs, after the discovery of the hidden drawer and its contents, no question could have been raised as to his object in doing so ; the interview near the lodge-gates would never have reached the point which it had reached ; and therefore no subsequent interview would have been necessary. Thus, however, the veriest straw had turned the scale ; already, as the Major expressed it to himself, he was "in for it," and he must do his best to make "it" prove remunerative. Nevertheless he felt ill at ease when he rose on the morning after the fierce passage of words in the avenue. George Martindale, too, felt little refreshed after the evening partly spent at The Cedars. It struck him that the face which the glass reflected had lost to some extent its easy and well-satisfied expression : there was a worn and anxious look about the eyes and mouth, and there was that irritability in his manner which betokens unsteady nerves or doubts as to a task to be accomplished.

He had determined not to wait for a casual meeting, and not to allow the Major a chance of starting off to Hexbury. It had not yet struck nine o'clock when he entered the library, and he at once rang the bell, and directed the servant who answered it to inform Major Munns that he should be glad to speak to him as soon as possible.

The servant departed with the message, and Martindale took up a position before the fire, ready to receive his guest. The picture is always more natural in its frame. Rob a man of his customary surroundings, and he speaks and acts with more constraint and greater difficulty than he would otherwise do. The parson never has so much authority as when he stands in his pulpit ; the physician in his own consulting-room appears to be a far more powerful controller of our destiny than if we meet him in somebody else's drawing-room ; the lawyer always advises with greater weight when he is seated at his own table, with the inevitable signs of his vocation around him. Thus, too, Martindale hoped that he had to some extent an advantage

in that he stood upon his own hearth-rug to receive instead of having to seek the man with whom he was to have an understanding.

The Major felt that the other had "won the toss" so far as position was concerned. He had, however, prepared the outlines of his programme and started accordingly, though with some degree of nervousness.

"My dear fellow," he said, advancing across the room with outstretched hand; "I am much obliged to you for letting me know you were here. I am afraid we were not quite so amiable as we might have been last night, and I for one am ready to say I am sorry for it. I was annoyed in various ways, and I daresay you were too. A man is not always master of his temper at such a time."

Then he took the chair to which Martindale motioned him, and carefully scrutinized his finger-nails, glancing at his small white hands with approval.

Whilst this was going on, Martindale stood waiting, and Tennyson's lines came into his head anent the worthlessness of the little hand and the dapper foot, "if half the little soul be dirt." He thought scornfully of the man who sat before him, but it never occurred to him to consider it possible that in course of time his own soul might become stained in a similar manner and proportion.

"I hope," he said, speaking with some irritability, after an awkward pause, "that you will not make it necessary for me to repeat all the questions which I put to you last night. It rests with you to say what you have to say, unless you would prefer to communicate with my lawyers. I have only to listen."

"Well, upon my honour," replied the Major with an air of candour, but at the same time glancing suggestively at the door, "I hardly know how to act for the best. I am in an uncommonly awkward position. I will be perfectly frank with you, if you wish it. The fact is, through an accident—the merest accident in the world—I have made a sort of discovery which may or may not affect your interests. I am no lawyer; I don't profess to understand this sort of thing, and I own I was anxious to have a little time to think it over

and make inquiries, and, in fact, to find out if possible what was the right thing to do."

Martindale had changed his position. He had left the hearth-rug and walked to the window nearest at hand, from which he now stood gazing out across the bare flower-beds and frosty lawn.

It is impossible for one to read a man's feelings by gazing at his back, and thus Major Munns was unable to gather what effect, if any, his words had produced. The tone in which the other spoke, after a few minutes' silence, did not afford him much information.

"I presume you have found some document?" Martindale said slowly, and without turning round.

"Exactly; I have found a document," replied the Major.

Then there was another pause.

"Now, really," continued Major Munns, when the ticking of the clock upon the mantel-piece had made itself heard for what seemed a considerable time. "Now, really, is it wise, is it worth while, to carry this matter farther at present? We shall only embarrass ourselves; depend upon it, we shall only embarrass ourselves."

He repeated this with a tone of genuine conviction, waited for a moment, then took up the thread again.

"What does it amount to, after all? I am staying in the house which belonged to the man who left you his property. As I have said, by the merest accident in the world I come across a—a document, a document purporting to be written by the late owner. It is of recent date, signed, I should say, only a day or two before his death, when he was living here with the old gardener and his wife. This document, so far as I can understand the deceased's wishes from reading it, expresses intentions inconsistent with the present state of things; but I am no judge of these matters. For anything I can know to the contrary, there may be nothing in it—that is to say, nothing of legal force or value; in fact I will go so far as to say that I believe it may be defective in some respects."

The concluding statement indicated a bolder policy than the Major had contemplated. His *rôle* shaped itself

as he went on. He took his cue from the silence of his hearer.

Still Martindale remained at the window motionless.

Once more the Major took up the argument. "I know, of course, that it would be a most unfortunate time for any question as to your position here and so forth to be raised. There is this election and there is the prospect of a future career in Parliament, and, of course, your approaching marriage. It would be unfair to you and to others also to do anything hastily. There are a great many things to be considered, and they can't all be considered in a moment. Don't you agree?"

There was still no reply from the motionless figure by the window.

"Well," said the Major, rising, "we can talk about it another time. Don't press me further now. At present, you and I are the only people who know anything about the matter. It will do no harm by keeping for a day or two."

He paused for a moment, then went on again. "Of course I will show you this paper if you wish it, and you can then judge for yourself; but that, I think, would be a mistake. No man in his senses could expect you to move in the matter. It is for me to take steps, if steps are necessary. I made the discovery, and I must take the responsibility. Anyone must acknowledge the position is a devilish hard one for you, and all because an eccentric old man was too fond of making wills and changing his intentions."

Again he paused. Then he took the place upon the hearthrug which Martindale had vacated, and went on in a lower tone, but with a more eager manner.

"I confess," he said, "that I am not one of your straight-laced high-and-mighty moralists. One must look at these things broadly, and judge what is fair all round, taking everything into consideration."

He stopped, and after a while gave a sort of inquiring cough. He felt that he was not being guided by any infallible sign-post. He had not succeeded in drawing in the other into any expression of opinion or concurrence with his views. He had simply been allowed to proceed

unchecked. Nevertheless that was something attained. He told himself, indeed, that it was a great point gained, and that at this stage he could not have expected more, particularly after the high ground which had been taken at the first interview. He waited again for a sign, but no sign came. The clock ticked on amid a silence otherwise unbroken, and the Major presently went softly across the room and passed into the hall, closing the double doors behind him.

Martindale did not seem to notice his departure. He still stood with his hands clasped behind him looking out upon the dull winter morning, but there was such a whirl within his mind that outward things really passed unnoticed. He hated himself that he had not spoken out in the clear and ready tones which honour demanded, yet in the same instant he tried to convince himself that he was uncompromised and could still hold the firm position which he had taken up on the previous evening. He knew not how much or how little to believe of what he had heard. He felt that there was a foundation in fact for what had been disclosed, but how far and in what respect it was glossed or distorted he could not tell, and had not dared to ask. It was clear enough to him that he was invited to take part in a conspiracy and he knew that the man who in this oily wily manner had made the suggestion would require to share the plunder. Yet he had not the courage to act as in his heart of hearts he thought an honest man should act if drawn to the verge of such a position. Then persuasive whisperings of excuse and palliation came. Had ever man been placed as he was? The stake affected not himself alone, he was not his own master, and the bonds which bound him to the electors at Hexbury and to Julia Hawkley at The Cedars could not be ignored. How was he to act? which way was he to turn? why had this cursed ill befallen him? With a half moan he leaned against the window frame, his soul sickening at the horrible entanglement in which he found himself. In that moment he learned how weak a man he was and felt that self-contempt which is so terrible to bear. The words of the French moralist fitted him:

“La faiblesse n'est pas la fausseté mais elle en tient bien la place.”

He started suddenly from his despairing attitude, roused by a knock at the door. He was conscious then for the first time that there had been several knocks which had passed unheeded. A servant was telling him that his carriage was at the door waiting to drive him to Hexbury—to show himself to his friends and supporters! He answered the man roughly, and went out at once into the hall. When he had put on his overcoat and hat, a sort of faintness seized him, and he kept the impatient horses waiting still longer, whilst he went into the dining-room and drank some brandy.

“Don't stand about there, staring,” he said, savagely, as he came into the hall again, and found two or three of the servants waiting. Then, half ashamed of his manner, he went out to where the horses were pawing the ground restlessly and sending forth great clouds of breath upon the wintry air.

“They'll want a steady rein, this morning, sir,” said the groom, who stood at their heads. His master answered nothing, but swung himself up into his seat, and the next moment started at a pace which showed little heed of the man's suggestion.

(*To be continued.*)





Laws of the Universe and Primary Education.

N the present state of society, viewed morally and intellectually, it is becoming a serious and puzzling question with Divines and Philosophers, and not less so indeed with all earnest thoughtful men, how it is that in this enlightened age, with greater facilities than the cause has ever before enjoyed, and more powerful machinery to promulgate its doctrines, the Christian religion is not making that headway against crime and the social evils that its professors wish to see, and labour hard to effect. We wish, in this paper, briefly to consider the subject, and to suggest what, in our humble opinion, are the principal reasons why greater success is not attained. The subject is one of course of too great magnitude and importance to be adequately treated of in a short paper of this kind, but our hope is that, by giving expression to the few thoughts which naturally arise, those more able than the writer may have their attention drawn to the matter, and interest themselves sufficiently to probe the question to the bottom, and, if possible, to apply a remedy.

And, in the first place, we shall not have to search far for the reason. It will be found in the ignorance of the masses of the people regarding the natural laws of the universe—the laws, physical and organic, which govern their own bodies; the moral and intellectual laws under which their brains act, and their intellect enjoys the functions which the Almighty has bestowed upon it; the phenomena of external

nature, animate and inanimate, physical and organic, and its modes of action under those laws ; and, finally, the relations between man and the organization and government of the world, and the practical rules to be deduced from knowledge and observation of them. And until the people know more of their own constitution and capabilities, and the immense power for good or evil that each individual wields, not only over himself, but over future generations and society generally, the anomalies every day seen in religious life will still be found.

God has given to man intellect to observe and reason upon facts presented to him, but if the intellect have distorted and erroneous views of circumstances presented, through ignorance, to its perception, it follows that its reasoning, and the conclusion arrived at, on the basis of those views will be entirely wrong, although perfectly in accordance with the conviction implanted in the man's mind. Thus, if a man be ignorant of the organic law which enacts that organized substances, if subjected to heat, are liable to combustion, he would be inclined, on being burned by contact with fire, to call in question God's providence which allowed him to be thus injured when he had done no moral wrong. That reasoning would be quite conclusive to him, because he is unaware of the wise and beneficent relations between organic substances and heat established by the Creator, by which we enjoy light and warmth and many other animal comforts. But when his eyes are opened to this law he will see that he suffered, not because God's providence slumbered in his individual case, but because he had infringed one of the laws which God has set up to regulate the phenomena of nature—which are invariable and constant in their action—and that consequently he was necessarily punished for so doing. It would not avail him that he was ignorant of the law : their action continues the same, and the infringement of any one of them—physical, organic, or moral, carries its own punishment along with it. Like all God's punishments, however, they are instituted for his creatures' benefit, and are intended to bring them back to the observance of the neglected law, and so to preserve

for them the blessings and advantages which obedience to the laws of nature confers.

Now, just as the man who was burnt could not, whilst he was in ignorance of the natural laws, understand his punishment, but who, as soon as they were explained to him, appreciated the kindness of the Creator in instituting so benevolent a law, and thankfully underwent his castigation, so neither can professing Christians see and duly appreciate God's providence in the evolutions of Nature and the course of everyday life, while they are ignorant of the principles of His government as displayed in His laws. Once let these be known to them, and many things which they now regard as the dark and inscrutable ways of Providence will be made plain, and the power be given them to do away with what are merely evils occasioned by disobedience to the physical, organic, or moral laws, and never intended by God to exist. While it is so with Christians we cannot wonder that the worldly-minded and those viciously inclined—seeing the evil, iniquity, and misery, of every description and in every form, that is rampant around ; observing, on the one hand, the wealth, luxury, idleness, and immorality of the rich ; and on the other the poverty, filth, vice, incessant toil, and wretchedness which is the lot of the poor ; reading the awful accounts of bloodthirsty murders, famines, wars, and pestilences ; the appalling narratives of so-called accidents, shipwrecks, &c. ; and at the same time hearing proclaimed from the pulpit God's mercy and love towards the world, and His benevolent providence in the government thereof—can we, I say, wonder that holy men of God have been and are unable to convince many of that love, which *apparently* is everywhere so conspicuously contradicted and set at nought ?

In his admirable work, *The Constitution of Man*,—which every one desirous of “knowing himself” should peruse—the late Mr. George Combe, in speaking of the relationship between Science and Religion, says :—

“ In surveying the world we perceive that definite qualities have been bestowed on the human mind and on external objects, and certain relations have been established between them ; that the mental faculties have been incessantly operating according to their

inherent tendencies, generally aiming at good, always desiring it, but often missing it through ignorance and blindness, yet capable of attaining it when enlightened and properly directed. The baneful effects of ignorance are everywhere apparent. Three-fourths of the mental faculties have direct reference to this world, and in their functions appear to have no intelligible relation to another—such are amativeness, philoprogenitiveness, combativeness, destructiveness, constructiveness, acquisitiveness, secretive ness, and others; while the remaining fourth appear calculated to act both in this life and in a higher state of existence—such are benevolence, ideality, wonder, veneration, hope, conscientiousness, and intellect. While the philosophy of mind continued a purely abstract theory, moralists and divines enjoyed an unlimited privilege (of which they largely availed themselves) of ascribing or denying to human nature whatever qualities best suited their several systems. But now the case is different. Organs cannot be added to or displaced from the brain by the fancy or the logic of contending disputants or sects; and philosophers and divines must hereafter study human nature as it exists, and accommodate their views to its actual qualities and relations. To guide and successfully apply the former class of faculties to the promotion of human happiness, it appears indispensable that the faculties themselves—the physical condition on which their strength and weakness, inertness and vivacity depend—the relations established between them and the external world, which is the theatre of their action—and, finally, the relation between them and the superior faculties, which are destined to direct them—should be known; and yet scarcely anything is known (in a philosophical and practical sense) on these points by the people at large."

The philosophy of the mind, as demonstrated by phrenology can now be studied by anyone; no excuse can be made for those who plead ignorance. Men, however, say the absorbing occupations of business and pleasure will not afford them the necessary time for this important study; and indeed there is no small amount of truth in the statement, though it reflects little credit on those making it. All the faculties and energies of man are concentrated on money-grubbing and the purposes of ambition, to the exclusion of all intellectual pursuits. The principles which actuate society, socially, commercially, and morally, are founded, in short, chiefly on the animal and selfish propensities, to the

neglect of the moral sentiments. The latter should, on all occasions, be the most active of the faculties : under this treatment they are rendered the most inert.

Under the present aspect of the social relations, therefore, it is almost—nay, absolutely—impossible to adequately meet the evil, or to effect the reforms which are so palpably needed in the direction indicated. But while admitting this, we cannot but feel that we might in our generation do something—put in train some machinery which would, in the ordinary course of Nature, in a few generations work out its own beneficial results, which we feel convinced, from study and observation, would be to ameliorate the condition of mankind, and to usher in a higher tone of morals throughout the civilised world, and tend more than anything to the supremacy of God Almighty in the hearts of His creatures as the Omnipotent Creator and Benevolent Preserver of the universe.

When the animal and selfish propensities are trained to occupy their proper sphere in the brain—that of subservience to the moral sentiments and intellect—and men forbear to act for their own sole benefit, not caring whether their fellow-creatures suffer by their acts or not; when benevolence, veneration, and conscientiousness are the motive powers to men's actions; and acquisitiveness, combative-ness, and the other selfish faculties are only exercised in their proper degrees where they are destined to be of great benefit, not only to him under their influence, but to his fellow-men generally ; then, and then only, will religion and piety flourish, and God occupy, as he should do, the first place in the minds and hearts of his people. Their highest pleasure will then be to serve him ; they will see his guiding hand in all things, and their minds will be trained instinctively to consider him and his laws in all they do, and to act in harmony with them.

The question then is—“ How can this desirable state of things be effected ? ” Only, we feel convinced, by education. It is shewn that we cannot educate the present generation: if even we could, little good would result from that. It is the young and rising generations who must have the necessary knowledge of God's laws of the universe imparted

to them, and their relations between the mind and external nature demonstrated, and so be able on arriving at maturity to deduce from them practical rules for the conduct of life, and to inculcate the same in their children.

We are aware that much has been written on this subject in past years, but to-day, when the cry of the people is for Education ! Education ! the time seems ripe for more vigorous action. This strikes us more forcibly when we reflect on the massive and expensive machinery under the School Board, which, under the Education Act of 1870, is now in fair working order, and producing results, doubtless, more or less satisfactory to its promoters. The ratepayers are paying annually enormous sums for the support of the Boards to enable them to carry out the new system of Education—albeit, a very expensive one, and the economy of which, the Boards, apparently, do not study. Let us then, while about it, see that our children have that class of knowledge which will prove in after years the *most* beneficial, and fit them and their descendants to be better citizens and truer men than their fathers before them.

It is unnecessary to point out to intelligent readers—at least that portion who possess any knowledge of the subject—the results that would ensue from a systematic course of instruction being placed within the reach of each child, on the constitution of man and nature generally, and the laws which govern it. Of course this instruction would vary with the ages and capacities of the scholars, but there appears no good reason why the information in one form or another should not be added to the routine of school work, and take a place—no unimportant one—beside the three R.'s.

If once the leaders in education, moral philosophy, and religion, recognized the importance of the principles here slightly touched upon, there could be no great difficulty in the development of a scheme of reform. When the lamentable ignorances that exist are cleared away, the followers of religion and the professors of philosophy will see that, instead of their aims being diametrically opposed to each other, they are both working for the common good, the advancement of a true, practical, Christian religion, and the honour and glory of Almighty God.



THE SAILOR'S DREAM.

THE sun had fallen from the golden skies,
Like some high hope of heaven, o'er the deep,
And Night, with yearning in her steadfast eyes,
Looked on the lands of Sleep.

And, in the nightly calm that ever seems
To bear us nearer to that angel-land
That smiles thro' all our hopes in gracious gleams
Like lighthouse o'er the strand,

The moonlight of a dream upon my soul
Fell with a silver radiance ; once again,
Far from the mighty winds that roar and roll
Through all the mighty main,

The smiling ship lay tranquilly at rest
Beside the beauty of my native shore ;
Into mine eyes the regions of the blest
In sunshine stole once more.

With eager steps I trod the happy plain
To that dear scene that midst the woodland ways
Long in my fancies blissfully had lain
Thro' all the darksome days.

Once more the river, winding broad and still,
Filled with a silver light the dewy dell ;
In its own dear old sweetness, with no will,
The pure spring from the well

Leaped in delightful youth ; beneath the tree
Once more we sat in glory, *she* and I ;
The birds were warbling of our love to me,
Of love the sunny sky

Whispered in silence of its silver beams ;
The ring-dove listened in the bowers above ;
Our hearts were pouring in sweet sylvan streams
Through all the land of Love.

Once more from summit of the soaring hill
That bent in beauty o'er our tranquil nest,
Where my life's restless youth was wont to fill
Its soul with Nature's rest,

With bright hearts burning in our glorious gaze
We viewed the sweetness of the sinking sun ;
When lo ! my sleep in cruel morning rays
Dissolved—my dream was gone !

D. R. WILLIAMSON.





VERONICA'S HOME.

CHAPTER I.

" GOOD-BYE."

 N a bright spring morning I left my old home—the house where I was born, where my happy childhood was passed. Tender and sweet memories crowded upon me ; tears filled my eyes, remembering "the days that are no more"—no more, of all sad words the saddest !

I was leaving the old life, the habits which are second nature, for a new world, for the change and excitement of the Unknown—to me most painful. An only child, brought up in solitude but for the nominal companionship of my father, Dr. Courtney (whose professional duties kept him constantly employed), I lived a happy life, peopled with bright thoughts and fancies and castle-building of the most gorgeous and airy proportions—doomed, I dimly began to believe, never to be realised.

My father's failing health obliged him to give up practice and retire upon what proved a scanty income, for we Courtneys were improvident : I from ignorance, he from excessive generosity and an amiable unworldliness which led to his being easily imposed upon.

A younger son of a noble family, he had been brought up in luxury, and when my poor mother died he was helpless to advise or correct my inexperience ; so we went on, leading our enjoyable life and indulging our taste for the Beautiful. Our finances would have been more impoverished had I not fortunately admired the simple rather than the more florid

and expensive style of Art ; and my father, vague and absent, a student and bookworm, was easily pleased, and satisfied his daughter could do no wrong. We both agreed in heartily condemning all that was ugly. Our establishment was well appointed and kept up, and very little put by for a rainy day. Now the rainy day had come, metaphorically speaking, for, as I have said, it was on a bright spring morning that we were leaving the happy home we could no longer afford for a small cottage in the country, hoping, when furnished with the relics of past grandeur, it would look pretty and be tolerably comfortable. It stood in a garden full of flowers, leading to a small kitchen-garden and well-stocked orchard.

The last day had come. Father was at Earlsmead, expecting the vans, and I remained to see them off.

"Dreary and dirty, dirty and dreary!" I murmured, as I wandered through the empty rooms, where every picture, every bracket, left a stain, alike on painted wainscot and on faded papers.

Down the uncarpeted stairs, carefully abstaining from putting a hand on the wide, dusty rail of the old twisted balusters, I went with a light step and a heavy heart. I was stifling in the house, and could bear it no longer. Seeking the garden, I went down the broad walk, bordered on one side by square flower beds, full of bulbs showing their green spikes, and sweet, fragrant winter violets ; on the other side, tall old trees, shading the once smoothly-shaven lawn.

It was come at last. Good-bye to the dear old beech tree, where, under the dark red foliage, Walter made me an offer—the only one I had received in my short, uneventful life. How well I remember his earnest face, the sun glinting through the heavy branches on his light hair ; how he pleaded ; how I, shy and startled, took refuge in sudden flight, only to be run down again under the next tall, sheltering tree, a magnificent Spanish chesnut, full of feathery bloom. Then, timid and blushing furiously, I almost said "Yes" ; but, fortunately, I recovered my self-possession before Walter understood my incoherent words, and I tried to make him see I only cared for him as a dear friend.

Poor Walter ! I was sixteen. Three years have passed ;

yet standing beneath the old tree brings back the scene to me as if it were but yesterday. Walter is married now, and oh! so happy. Did I sigh? If I did, it is only because I am depressed and my heart is breaking at the thought of the "Never more! never more!"

The variegated hawthorn was a sheet of snowy bloom, the fruit-blossoms blushed rosy red upon the sunny southern wall, the tame little robin hopping before me merrily sang his farewell song. I burst into tears, and only wiped my eyes as the carman came to say the last van was starting. He asked for beer; and, opening my poverty-stricken purse, I gave him two shillings, and telling him to call a cab, I turned my back upon the old home. The sun shone in dazzling splendour, and I left it encircled with a double halo of sunshine and happy memories.

What does the veiled Future hold in her closed hand?

CHAPTER II.

THE NEW HOME.

AT home, in our cosy quarters, I declared father was like a lobster in a shrimp's shell. He indignantly rejected the insinuation, being a small, spare man; I, on the contrary, was large and tall, golden-haired, dark-eyed, "a true Courtney," and, to my lasting grief, boasting the true Courtney nose—a Roman hook—making the old Norman name of "Short-nose" a bitter mockery.

Turning the tables upon me, he answered I looked every inch a queen, and too fine and majestic a woman for our tiny house. Alas, I had not the heart to laugh! The eternal sameness, the monotony, the narrow life, the narrow income, were telling upon me; and, although I tried to interest myself in our surroundings, I felt I was a failure. Gladly would I have helped in parish work; but, shy of visiting at the cottages, I was beginning to despair, when the dear old

clergyman himself came to the rescue, asking me to play the harmonium and undertake the choir. The church, a beautiful specimen of Gothic architecture, was well cared for by the enthusiastic rector. It stood in Leighholm Park, surrounded by a sea of waving grassy mounds, graves of parishioners passed away to their long rest, and conspicuous among them a large marble monument bearing the name and arms of the Leights of Leighholm Court.

The Court, a fine old mansion, was well placed on a gently rising slope, embowered in elms and beeches. Through the Park was a right of way and a narrow footpath leading to the church. A rustic bridge, or rather a plank across a running brook, and a stile, overshadowed by an immense oak, divided the churchyard from the Park. It was a favourite haunt of mine. I felt more at home under the greenwood trees than shut up in our confined cabin.

The Leights were in Italy, where Lady Amabel died; since when there was some talk of letting the Court. With such a dearth of county people and rich families in the neighbourhood, it was not surprising that rector and villagers alike hoped the rumour might be true.

My kind old friend had been away for a month, and in his absence we were more than usually dull. I missed him, too, on Sunday, when his place was inefficiently supplied by the mildest of men and curates. The reverend gentleman, appropriately named Lamb, was uninteresting, musical, meek, and with high church proclivities. I must confess that, encouraged by what he was pleased to term "our harmonious sympathy," he cherished a blind admiration and hopeless attachment for his unworthy coadjutor, and my second offer was received one Sunday after evening service. I had stayed late, playing out the congregation to the spirited strains of the "Wedding March," and looking back, I saw the nervous man following me with rapid steps, his long coat tails flapping in the wind. Hovering like a huge bird of prey, he gained upon me. Stifling a laugh at his ludicrous appearance, I drew myself up in a dignified manner and stood my ground.

His offer was a check to my musical enthusiasm; and

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deprived, at least, during the rector's absence, of one of my few resources, I fell back upon another. The black art I dabbled in was photography. I had perfected it so far that I seriously contemplated making it my line, and by selling the pictures, adding to our slender income. Of course, my gems of art were to realise fabulous prices.

The sun was shining, the air sweet with the scent of fragrant bean fields and freshly-mown grass. Father had some new books to read, so I remarked—

“Just the morning to photograph the old Court! ‘If ‘twere done, ‘twere well it were done quickly,’ or it may be let, and I must let it alone; so good-bye, father dear, till my return.”

Whistling my black retriever Prim, named after the brave Spanish General, and accompanied by old Ben, our odd man, carrying the camera, I started. At the bridge I cashiered Ben with strict orders to mount guard again in an hour's time, and having long since settled the best position from which to take the Court, I set up my machine and quickly disappeared under the rusty black velvet square to sight it properly. The Court was to sit full face, showing the ivy-wreathed mullioned window called the Lady's Bower. To my surprise there was a general air of briskness about the usually deserted place. “The tenants are coming, tololdewlol,” I sang softly to the air of “The Campbells are Coming,” when I was interrupted by furious barking. Evidently Prim was flying at some indiscreet yokel. The barking waxed louder. I must not let the dog eat up the unfortunate intruder, so I growled from under my velvet pall—

“Down, Prim, quiet sir.”

“Down, Prim, quiet sir,” was echoed, in a charming bass voice; not the curate's weak tenor, nor a yokel's uneducated guttural—no! an unknown, full-toned, rich baritone. I felt quite nervous, and lingered under my black shroud, hoping the intruder would retire. Prim was quiet. I heard retreating steps, and prepared to emerge from my hiding place, when the same voice said—

“Good dog. Lie down, good Prim.”

Prim must have gone over to the enemy; I was stifling

with heat and vexation—my plate was getting dry. I determined to appear, Jack-in-the-box-like. I did so, and taking off the cover, watch in hand, I counted the seconds necessary to expose the picture, then clapping on the lid in a highly professional manner, I turned, to see a tall, handsome, military-looking man, with lovely eyes, straight nose, and heavy tawny moustache, no whiskers ; Prim, faithless dog, fawning at his feet.

What did he think of me ? my hair tangled, hanging in graceless confusion down my back, and over my eyes. I had thrown off my battered old garden hat, my holland gown, alas ! limp and soiled ; for had not that wretched dog, in the exuberance of his spirits, jumped up with wet feet, imprinting his muddy caresses in countless dirty patterns all over me ? My shabby washleather gloves, stained all colours from the nitrate of silver, completed my disreputable appearance. That I was a strolling photographer was the only conclusion he could arrive at. I longed to bear off my camera, like an organ grinder, and walk away from those scrutinising eyes.

Where, oh where, was Ben ? Would he never come ? Would that intruder not at once withdraw and relieve me from his unwelcome presence ? Even as I thought it, I knew it was untrue ; I felt irresistibly drawn towards the frank, noble-looking face of the stranger.

" You have chosen the best view of the old house ; have you any photographs to show me ? " he enquired, adding, " I have long wished for one."

Yes, he evidently did take me for a strolling artist. Annoyance, and the spirit of mischief, prompted my reply—

" I hope this will be a success ; if so, you can have some copies—but, they are expensive."

" Are they *very* dear ? " he asked, with an almost imperceptible smile, or was it a sneer ?

" Will you spare me six copies ? "

" Oh ! certainly," I replied in as *degagé* a manner as I could ; " where shall I send them ? "

" To the Court."

" The Court !" how stupid of me, of course, he was

the new tenant; and turning very red, I hastily remarked—

“I hope you don’t think me a trespasser. The villagers have a right of way through Sir Percival’s park.”

He seemed amused, and I hastily stooped to pick up my hat, bitterly regretting my becomingly-plumed Rembrandtesque one. It is difficult to be dignified in tatters, but I tried to show him I considered the interview at an end, when, with a provoking smile, he offered to help pack and even carry my camera.

“Thank you,” I observed, very stiffly, “the man will come for it, I will not trouble nor detain you.”

He raised his hat and left, returning, however, to say—

“Don’t forget the photograph.”

“Your order shall be attended to,” I said demurely, adding, “what name did you say?”

“Leigh.” Raising his hat once more, he bowed and walked away, leaving me, mentally crushed, and feeling as defeated as I looked.

The Leighs back, and the dear old Vicar not there to introduce them; how vexing! This one, I decided must be the second brother, the Captain Valentine Leigh—how handsome he was.

Sitting on the stile, waiting for Ben, I wondered if Sir Percival Leigh were as good-looking—if they would call upon us, and if I should really carry out my joke and send the photo. Did he not look upon me, Veronica Courtney, as a professional strolling photographer. There was a tinge of bitterness in my laugh. Fine feathers make fine birds, I cynically thought; yet, after all, I had only myself to thank for the ridiculous and undignified position in which I was placed. Some days after this adventure, I found myself, after choosing a simple but becoming costume, sauntering idly through the park; nevertheless, I shyly avoided the stile, striking out in the opposite direction. I felt a strange longing to see the handsome Captain again, but I was returning disappointed, when, in the field near home, leading to our orchard, we met. With a bright smile lighting up his face, he greeted me.

" You have not kept your promise—are you faithless like other women? Why have you forgotten my order? Did the photo not succeed? "

" Oh, yes, it is very good, but——," here I hesitated and blushed; " do you really care to have one? "

" Do I care? indeed I do—more than I can tell you. I've been away for years, and have often wished for a picture to remind me of the home full of happy memories, and yours I shall value yet more highly, since you have taken my mother's favourite room—the Lady's Bower—and now she is gone, anything reminding me of her is very precious."

Touched by the sadness in his voice, I promised to send a copy.

In silence he accompanied me through the sloping fields till we reached the orchard gate, when I halted, bowed, and would have passed on.

He held out his hand.

" Good-bye; my brother and I will take an early opportunity of calling upon you, and making Dr. Courtney's acquaintance. You see I know your name."

I muttered some confused answer and turned away.

I felt he watched me till I disappeared among the laurel bushes screening the house. That evening I mounted the photograph, and addressing it to Captain Leigh, sent it to the Court. Would he acknowledge it? Yes!—no!—two days passed—how bitterly I regretted sending it. I had not seen nor heard from him, neither he nor his brother having paid their promised visit. Much annoyed at his remissness, and wounded at the slight, I felt very angry; when, one day, after returning with my father from a long day's shopping at our county town, I found two cards on the table. Sir Percival and Captain Leigh had called during our absence. On Sunday I saw him in church, and, for the first time, the Baronet his brother. They were wonderfully alike, but Sir Percival had not the winning smile and fascinating manner of his younger brother—he looked older and more careworn; in height, figure, colour and complexion, one might have passed for the other.

After church, the Captain introduced his brother to me.

I regretted my father's absence, he was unwell and keeping his room, and managed to answer their enquiries politely, and without too much blushing or feeling too awkward. Both brothers were attentive, and frequently called to enquire, sending fruits and flowers for the invalid, and somehow it happened that, whenever I walked out, Valentine Leigh seemed instinctively to know my hour, and all my favourite haunts—we met daily. Coming from the sick room, tired and dispirited, his genial brotherly kindness never failed to cheer me, I looked for his presence as a ray of light in those dark hours of anxiety. It was a blow when he told me he was obliged to go to London, adding, he might be detained, but he would return soon.

Here Sir Percival joined us—Valentine looked angry at the ill-timed interruption—yet, I felt an unaccountable feeling of relief; I shrank timidly from the avowal of his love, the certainty of what I longed for, seemed too much happiness. I almost feared a change, and that the intense bliss might be marred, even though that change would give more perfect happiness, it was enough to feel that he loved me.

Sir Percival, black as a thunderstorm, briefly apologising to me, gave his brother a foreign letter to read, I said good-bye and left them.



CHAPTER III.

MARRIED.

A WEEK later I, too, was in London. The vicar had returned to Earlsmead. My father was better; and, being no longer alone, insisted upon my carrying out an engagement I had long since made to visit my quondam admirer, Walter Howard, and his wife. How our tastes and fancies change with time. Walter's wife, Amy, was a tiny, dark-haired, bright-eyed brunette; Walter, too, had grown fat and prosperous-looking. She was too entirely beloved to feel other

than pity for one whom she doubtless regarded as her less fortunate rival. They were both happy; and I, too, was happy in the knowledge that I was breathing the same air as my beloved—happy, walking in the Row, driving in the Park, or visiting exhibitions, flower *fêtes*, concerts—anywhere and everywhere there was the chance of meeting. At last, indeed, we met: “ ‘Twas in a crowd.” We were at the Opera—I absorbed, listening to the silvery voice of the sweetest and greatest of cantatrices; Mrs. Howard divided between music and scanning the house to greet friends and acquaintances. Suddenly I heard her exclaim, in a pleased tone, to her husband—

“ There’s Mr. de Lisle! He’s coming here. Vera, you will like him, he is such an adorable little creature; the prettiest, wittiest, and tiniest thing in the world; but great fun, and such a *chronique scandaleuse*!”

A knock at our box; Mr. de Lisle entered. His talk, as small as himself, flowed on in an uninterrupted stream. I was not interested until I heard the name of Leigh. He was saying—

“ Sir Percival’s the most popular man in town; all the Belgravian mothers are in full cry. Several men of ours have heavy bets on ‘em, as to which will run him to earth.”

“ You know the Leigs, Vera dear,” Amy said; “ you should go in for the Baronet, and as Mr. de Lisle would say, ‘the odds are in your favour as you’ve the start.’ ”

“ I? Oh, dear, no! besides, I’ve the bad taste to prefer the Captain.”

“ Oh, fie! Miss Courtney,” Mr. de Lisle observed; “ you mustn’t admit that. He’s not a Turk—at least, he is a Turk, they say—but I mean he’s not a Mahomedan or a Mormon, to indulge in bigamous affections here. Don’t you know he’s married? Quite a romance!”

Married? I turned faint; but managed to sit quite still and quiet while, as in a dream, I heard Amy beg for the story.

“ *On dit*, you know, Captain Leigh has been married for the last two years to a nobody—cook, dressmaker, ballet dancer, or some one of the kind. He kept it dark during

his mother's life, and went on enjoying himself *en garçon* until the other day, when the abandoned Ariadne showed up and claimed her recalcitrant spouse, *de par la loi*, I suppose. Falling at Sir Percival's fraternal feet, she threw herself upon his hands. Of course, he had to pick her up (I should have set her down—hi, hi, hi!), and reconciled the ill-matched couple. She's a magnificent creature, but low—low."

As in a dream I sat.

"How strange! Why there they are—man and wife and Sir Percival—harmoniously sitting as the Happy Family!"

He bowed, and Amy, passing the glasses to me, said—

"They are looking at you, dear. She's like a French actress, handsome, but how got up and over-dressed!"

"Undressed," I hear that odious de Lisle mutter.

With a sharp pang I look through the glasses at the beautiful woman. Valentine bowed, and I responded mechanically. He rose. Was he coming to us? As Mr. de Lisle left, Amy noticed how white I looked, and begged him to leave the door open. He did so, and I heard Valentine speaking to him. He entered; I introduced him to my friends. He took the seat by my side, and expressed his delight at seeing me in town. I replied curtly, and relapsed into silence. No ring of falsehood in his voice. Alas, that we can detect base metal, yet man's countenance bears no mark of evil! He had the same frank, truthful look of old, the winning smile; he was in high spirits, too, and I heard him chatting gaily and laughing with Amy and her husband. He stayed with us until the opera was over. Had he forgotten his wife. He carefully and tenderly wrapped my large cloak around me; and I managed to say, in a tolerably steady but husky voice—

"Let me congratulate you; better late than never. Think of my having flirted with a married man!"

"You flirted!" he echoed; "I don't understand." Suddenly he said, in a changed voice—"Good heavens! let me explain—"

"Vera, dear, Walter has found the carriage. Make haste, love."

Amy and Walter hurried me into the carriage, and as he left, Valentine hastily whispered, "To-morrow." I bowed and we drove off.

Amy was pleasantly excited, and loud in her praise of him, hoped Sir Percival might be half so nice. Walter looked grave and preoccupied, I took refuge in silence pleading headache—that convenient cloak for heartache.

How I longed for the dawn for what the morrow would bring forth, yet, what availed it to hear him excuse his deceit—yet, I longed to see him once more and then farewell and for ever. After a sleepless night, I arose and opening the window, watched the morning quicken in the grey, "And heard the silence open like a flower, leaf after leaf."

I was dressed early, to be greeted by a telegram from the Vicar, begging me to return at once. He was uneasy about my father.

I left, asking Amy to receive Captain Leigh, if he should call, and explain the reason of my absence. Looking wistfully at me, she stroked my cheek gently, murmuring—"Whatever is, is right."

I should have resented it, but tears were in her eyes, I really felt too weak and ill to think much of her. I begged her to write, and forgot to leave any message for her kind husband.

My tale is almost told.

My father was better, and the crisis past. His pleasure in having me back cheered me. I awaited Amy's letter; it came at last, and was handed to me with Sir Percival's card.

Valentine's brother! My heart beat fast, my colour came and went, I dreaded the interview. Leaving Amy's letter unopened, I hurried bravely down the stairs, only to hesitate at the closed door. It behoved me to carry myself with dignity. Summoning all my courage I entered; I had need of it. Not Sir Percival, but Valentine himself, advanced to meet me. Ashy pale, I turned and swayed forward. He caught me in his arms—

"Vera, dearest, forgive me—forgive my deceit. Fool that I was—"

His voice shook, I trembled in his embrace, I tried to speak,

the words would not come; I tried to stand, I could not; yet, I must put an end to this embarrassing situation. He had humbled himself before me, and acknowledged his deceit; he begged for forgiveness. I must spare him further pain and humiliation.

Timidly I raised my eyes to his, only to close them hastily, to shut out the longing look of passionate love I read there.

Again I tried to extricate myself from his clinging embrace. His strong arms were round me, he covered my burning face with kisses, and through a dim mist of tears, I heard his pleading voice—

“Say, you forgive me.”

“Let me go—Valentine, let me go,” I gasped.

“Darling!—not Valentine, I am Percival.”

R. A. LEA.

AN OLD LOVE.

VIRTUE, I see by vice's aid,

Through gloom-ribbed gloom of dungeon bars,
As from the dead light of deep shade,

One sees by day the living stars.

'Tis she I loved in earnest youth,

Who sometimes turned her eyes on me,
And charmed me with their light of truth,
And thrilled me then with chastity.

Fine essence of the cosmic grace,

Her awful beauty charms me still,
But far from me is turned her face,
And feebly I conceive her will.

Have I then sunk so far below

The light of her averted face?

Her line of vision strikes the snow,

On peaks which fray the stellar space.

EASTWOOD CAVE.



THE FOREST OF MELFORD.

A Story of the Day in which we Live.

By A. J. DUFFIELD.

One of the Authors of "Masston; a Story of these Modern Days," &c., &c.

CHAPTER XIX.

"I conceive, sir, that you must have thought me exceedingly rash in placing such a tragedy as *Hamlet* on the French stage. Not to speak of the barbarous irregularities with which it abounds—the spectre in full armour and long speeches, the strolling actors, the fencing bout—all these appeared to me to be matters utterly inadmissible on the French stage; nevertheless, I deeply regretted being unable to bring upon it that awful Ghost, who exposes crime and demands revenge. I was therefore obliged, in a certain sense, to create a new play. I simply tried to make an interesting part of a parricidal Queen, and, above all, to paint in the pure and melancholy soul of Hamlet a model of filial tenderness. I looked upon myself while composing this character as a religious artist who is working at an altar-piece."—*DUCIS to GARRICK (quoted by Dr. Doran in "Shakespeare in France")*.

MR. MICHAEL STRAWLESS was in a confused state of mind. He was not master of himself, and he was painfully conscious that he was unable to conquer others to his will, or bend the current of events or the strain of circumstances to serve his purposes. This was so unlike Strawless that not only to himself had he become

an enigma, his wife also became alarmed, and she confided her fears to her eldest son.

"You let him alone," said Tom, "the Guv'nor's up to something, no doubt. No, there's nothing wrong in business. What you've got to do is to let him alone, I say."

Not only to the learned and pure is wisdom granted, but also to the low and vulgar, and it would appear to be as impartially bestowed as is the useful trouble of the rain. No advice to a wife could be wiser than that which Tom Strawless gave to the wife of his father; and it was acted upon in a wise and careful manner. She kept out of her husband's way, but was always close at hand. If he was moody, she became cheerful and busy; if—as Strawless would, during this uncommon fit of the blues (as Tom characterised his father's condition)—if he suddenly came into Mrs. Strawless's room, sat down without saying a word, started up again, and again started out into his office and returned, Mrs. Strawless would quietly occupy herself in some intensely simple piece of duty, such as opening her large watch and examining its inside; or, what Strawless most liked, she would go over her dinner-book and plan another dinner for twelve, for she always kept an account of the dishes at her parties, with remarks on the cooking; and if this be not a perfect illustration of Milton's matrimony, in which will anticipating will invites to boundless confidence, it would be difficult to find one. It was so regarded in Mulberry.

Truth to tell, Strawless was overcome by the perfume of the Bishop. That which had entered his senses as a pleasing intoxication had at last run away with those necessary servants of his mind; at least, he could not collect them, do what he would. He wanted to destroy the map which he had received in trust from Quicksett, and he could not; he wanted to make some surreptitious alterations on its surface, and he could not do that; he wanted to frighten Stephen Bond into the belief that he had no title to his land, and that he could not do, for the very obvious reason that he was in far worse case himself, and he had read sufficiently of Chancery practice to know the importance of not letting slip the dogs of law. There was, it is true, some possibility in

Strawless being found out if he tampered with Quicksett's map, and that might have had its deterring effect ; but it is due to the Bishop to say that it was owing to his influence over Strawless that Strawless was now at a loss how best to do the best for himself and the worst for his fellow-creatures. In his extremity he had recourse to a mixture known in Mulberry as brandy and soda—a lotion prepared by the druggists for internal diseases and obstructions of the thorax, and believed by speculators in corn to be equal to the office of changing in five minutes a loggerhead into a divinely-inspired being.

" What a horrible stench ! " exclaimed the Rev. Salter Thyme as he entered Strawless's room.

" Stench ? " retorted Strawless : " what d'ye mean ? " for the expression on Thyme's face answered to the words he had spoken, and Strawless marked it with wonder.

" I must have a cigar," said the parson, " if I am to stay, or this odious smell will make me ill, and I want to spend an hour in very serious talk with you."

Strawless received all this with a loud laugh, the first in which he had indulged for three days. But there was no response from the Vicar, which caused much wonder in Strawless ; on the contrary, the Vicar sat in meditative solemnity, without furnishing the slightest sign that he intended to be funny.

" What's up ? " cried Strawless at last, in the usual Mulberry form.

" I am," said the Vicar, " a converted character," now looking intently into the fire, and then raising his eyes to those of Strawless.

" Ha ! ha ! ha ! " roared Strawless ; " why it is not four days since I last saw you, and you certainly weren't converted then."

" Well, I am now," said the Vicar, who was quick at picking up experience and making use of it, and he did not intend that Father Strawless should get the best of it, as had Strawless the son, and the Vicar went on smoking, and gazing thoughtfully at the fire.

" I had no idea that a man and a parson could be con-

verted in a couple of days," said Strawless, and again he indulged in a laugh which compelled him to wipe his eyes.

"How long does it take a driver to reverse his engine?" inquired Thyme, in an uncommon voice.

"Oh, come," said Strawless and sat down, for he saw there was something up, and he put on his best face, placed his cambric handkerchief on his knees, and pulled another bottle of soda water.

"Answer the question," said Thyme, good-naturedly, "and how many bottles of B. and S. have you had this morning?"

"Which question would you like answered first, young shaver?" inquired Strawless, still confident that the Vicar was acting a part, yet suspecting that there was something up after all, and that of an unusual kind.

"A driver," answered Strawless, "can reverse his engine as easily and as quick as I draw this cork," and out the cork came with the usual report.

"So quickly," said the Vicar, rising, "can a man who pretends to the distinction of a man turn from his evil ways."

"You've got no evil ways, old man," said Strawless. "Sit down and tell us what's up, if it is anything else but a temperance lecture."

"Have you," said Thyme, "grown cold already about the church? I have just come from the Bishop, who is a little surprised at not having seen or heard from you."

Strawless's brain cleared like a shot. He rang his bell, and told the servant, in his old peremptory way, to "take away those things," as if he had been Oliver Cromwell. A rich colour spread over his face as he said, "I was never so hot upon it as I am now."

Which may be true. It is no less true, however, that Strawless, in planning how best to circumvent Stephen Bond, how to blind or delude Quicksett, how to put down more fencing in the forest, how, in brief, to steal more common land, had absolutely forgotten for the time his own vigorous plan which he had proposed to the Bishop for effecting that nefarious object. And this is not strange, when we consider how deadening a thing selfishness is in the

prospect of becoming suddenly and enormously rich by the aid of brandy and soda and secret theft. Be that as it may, if Salter Thyme had not called on Strawless at that particular moment, it is quite likely that the stealing of Melford Forest by means of the Church and the instrumentality of the Bishop of the diocese would not have taken place.

"When does his lordship propose to begin?" inquired Strawless.

"He is waiting for you," was the eager answer.

With that swiftness which Strawless had denied to the conversion of a man, did he convert himself into a resolute champion of religion. "There's nothing like striking the iron whilst it's hot," he said; "let me smoke this little weed, and we will go about it at once."

With that he lit his cigar, took pen and paper, and began to write out a list of names, at the head of which was that of Sir James Bomzley. He then washed his hands, took a new hat out of its box, and said to Thyme—

"Come on."

"What are you going to do?" inquired Thyme.

"Pick up twenty thousand pounds; and if not that, then ten, five, four, three, two, or one. Rome wasn't built in a day, and you can't build a beautiful Gothic church in Melford in three hours. Come along."

As they were leaving the room in which all this took place, Arthur Quicksett drove up with Jack Newton to ask for the map which Strawless had planned to alter or destroy, but could not, for the perfume of the Bishop of Mulberry.

And Strawless, heartily glad to get rid of it, handed it to Quicksett with the extemporary remark—

"This can't be a map of Melford Forest; there is nothing in existence corresponding to the lines which are drawn upon it. I have not been able to do anything for you, old fellow, for I can make neither top nor tail of the thing."

Thyme and Newton exchanged greetings.

"Have you called on Brydges yet?" said the first.

"I am on my way there," said Jack, not in a very confident voice, for he had some indefinable doubt regarding his fitness for the post he sought, or the likelihood of

Brydges taking to him—he wasn't sure which, he was only sure that his doubts were strong and far from comforting.

"Well, give the Doctor my love, and say I am very anxious that you should be enlisted," said Thyme, in a good cheery voice, which much pleased Jack.

"I want you fellows to dine with me," said Strawless, "to-morrow—quite a scratch dinner you know, but there will be ladies, that is, if my wife can prevail on your sister and the people at the Grove to come on so short a notice."

"I think Harrie can come," said Jack, "at any rate, I shall be very happy."

"Then," said Strawless, "that fixes it." He likewise fixed Thyme and Quicksett, who would have been too glad to have been able to answer for someone as Jack had for his sister.

They separated, and Strawless and Thyme went to the office of Sir James Bomzley. Everybody of importance has an office in Mulberry, including the Bishop. These rooms are called chambers elsewhere, but they are precisely the same things, and used for the same purposes. Some are grander than others, and provided with double doors and inner rooms or closets, for private talk—or treason. Such an office was that of Sir James Bomzley.

Strawless and Thyme found the Knight very busy, but he received them with great cordiality, and intreated that they would wait five minutes, and he would attend to them.

"We will wait," said Strawless.

"Begging, eh?" said Sir James, as in less than five minutes he returned and ushered them into his own room.

"Yes," said Strawless, "and we want a good start." He then, in a few bold and cheerful words, explained the nature of the work that was going to be done—that it was the Bishop's wish, and he hoped he might go to the length of saying that his friend Salter Thyme would be the first vicar of the new church.

"What sort of a church are you going to build," enquired Sir James, "nothing paltry I hope—how much do you propose to spend?"

To these questions Strawless answered—for he had

begged Thyme to let him manage the old beggar—"Paltry! I should think not: it will be the first church the Bishop consecrates, he hasn't consecrated one yet; he was only consecrated himself you know last year, and we must do something extra; besides, these are not the days for us to let it be said by the other side that we think more of our own houses than we do of the house of God, don't you know, Sir James. We must spend fifty thousand, and we shall get it to-day if you start us well."

The Knight then took a new and an ordinary penny memorandum-book from Strawless—went to a side desk, and in less time than it takes to write down what he did—he signed his name, and returned the book, not to Strawless, but to Salter Thyme.

"Let me speak to you one second," said the Knight to Strawless, opening a double door, pushing Strawless through it, turning and smiling to Thyme, and saying, "I am sure you will excuse us—only a second."

Thyme, left to himself, opened the paltry little memorandum-book, and his amazed eyes fell on the line—

"James Bomzley, £5,000."

"My nephew tells me that this spy who is down here is up to mischief, and likely to cause trouble; would it serve to get him out of the way?" said Bomzley to Strawless in a dry, low voice, and referring to Arthur Quicksett.

Strawless did not trust himself to speak aloud, and he placed his lips close to the right ear of the Knight, and whispered, and what he said no one heard, at least on this earth, except Michael Strawless and Sir James Bomzley.

That was all, and it only occupied a second, and the three all found themselves again together in the room now made sacred to Salter Thyme.

"A glass of sherry?" said the Knight to both.

"No, thanks," they both answered.

On which they shook hands and the Knight in pleasant tones and with a good smile on his large face said—

"Well good bye, God bless you," and the two went out.

No sooner had the mendicant layman and his clerical

brother left Sir James Bomzley than the knight suddenly seized his hat and hurried out into the street, where he met first Jim Margreaves.

THE KNIGHT—"Jim, I'll bet thee five ponies to two that Strawless drives his carriage and pair in less than a year, and dines with the Bishop and stays at the palace all night."

MARGREAVES—"That's a rum bet, Sir James, but I'll cry done."

Further on, at the corner of Frideswide Square, stood a group of three or four Mulberry rich men with nothing to do, standing, to borrow a phrase, idle, although not in the market place.

They talk—"Bomzley's up to something."

"Perhaps want's to sell his gin shop."

"Don't you believe it, he knows a thing worth two of that."

SIR JAMES, who has approached—"Well lads this is an idle day. What a fellow Strawless is, he's going to build a slap-up church at Melford.

1st GENT.—"Then that'll send up the price of land."

2nd GENT.—"He's a deep cove."

3rd GENT.—"And has had the Bishop to dinner."

SIR JAMES—"He'll drive his carriage and pair in less than a year."

2nd GENT.—"Not a bit of it."

1st GENT.—"I'll bet a level hundred he does."

SIR JAMES—"I'll give five hundred to three."

3rd GENT.—"Done with you, Sir James."

In this way did Strawless get renown—by this means in an incredibly short space of time a vast sum of money was raised for the building of a handsome church at Melford in the early English style. Sir James Bomzley was not actuated by any sordid feeling in making these bets, but the thing which flashed across his mind after Strawless and Thyme had left him was that he had, without thinking of it, done a deed that would enable Sam Rabens to win from him two ponies, and straightway he went and hedged so as to prevent Sam "having the laugh at him." If he could only

have got a bet on the subject with Sam himself Sir James would have been the happiest man alive. He meant to try, although he was quite sure that Sam would smell a rat.

Some men are always in luck. Sir James Bomzley was one of these. It was pure accident that Sir James on one occasion was made Mayor of Mulberry, but it was his luck that brought the Queen to the town in his mayoral year on a royal visit, when her Most Gracious Majesty gave him a slap on the shoulder with a borrowed sword and made him a knight. It was no less his luck that from that day Sir James became one of the most popular men in the great town. Immediately after the ceremony of knighting, Sir James drove through the principal streets, all crowded with holiday-keepers, who had stopped work to worship the Queen, and as Sir James rode past in his scarlet cloak and massive gold chain of office, splendidly jewelled, he smiled like a man drunk with happiness. Everybody laughed, not jeeringly, but because being happy and seeing the great face of Sir James beaming with splendid bliss and inviting sympathy, they cheered and he bowed, and the more Sir James bowed the more did they cheer. Ever since that memorable day there is never any gathering of the people in Mulberry but Sir James is called for, when he bows and the people cheer. Thus he was always in luck. So now, who should come up at this moment but Sam Rabens.

"Well, Sir James," he said, "so you are helping me to a walk over for my two ponies; however, to show you I have no malice, I put my name down under yours for the same amount."

"Never thought of it, Sam, so help me Bob, until Strawless had wheedled it out of me," said the Knight.

"It's a good idea," said Rabens. "I hear Stephen Bond has offered to sell his land to Jim Margreaves."

"Has he though; what's the figure?"

"There's been nothing said yet, for Jim finds that it has never been staked out, and this fellow Quicksett, who is here, says something about its belonging to the public, or something of that sort; at any rate, there's some mess about Stephen's title, it seems."

Jack Newton found Dr. Brydges at home. As he knocked at the door, a strange, unhappy feeling came over him. The thought returned to his mind that his application to serve the public would be rejected. Why, he could give no reason. Jack was not a timid man, nor one who gave way to thinking outside of his head; he was not nervous. Perhaps some Aerial Being sat at that moment on his ear and kept whispering, "They won't have you."

The reception which the gentle policeman gave to Jack dethroned the Aerial Being.

"Have you," said Brydges, "thought of any branch of the service that would best suit you? You see, I don't know you enough to enable me to cut out for you any work. But you are a Cambridge man, and that goes a great way with me. You have quite made up your mind to serve?"

"Quite," said Jack, with a very cheerful nod to the young doctor, and continued, "I have thought of three things that might be of importance. The Forest of Melford wants looking after, for it turns out that much of it belongs to the people, who have been cheated of it and frightened from its use."

"Very interesting," said the Doctor, "but won't do. You would be entrenching on the privileges of the rich, who, since the days of fighting for territory ended, or since swords were beaten into coins, have no way of being distinguished but in the occupation of land by peaceable pillage or such modes of fraud as money can devise. I should lose my character if I were even to suggest such an idea as a constable for Melford Forest. Why you can't get even *The Universe* or *The Top*, two of our most watchful papers, to touch the subject."

Jack was less troubled than Brydges on that, for he had but little doubt, when the authorities should read Quicksett's statements, that the rightful owners of Melford Forest would meet with full justice; so he said—

"The other two subjects are much more complicated, but none the less important. I mean Emigration and Recruiting for the Army. The manner in which some of our best men are spoiled and ruined for lack of a little guidance and control makes me shudder."

Brydges looked at Jack, but said nothing only—

“ I am listening.”

“ It should be held an honour,” Jack proceeded to say, “ to serve Her Majesty : it is looked upon as a disgrace, and certainly it is made a means of degradation. There are very few men who serve the Queen in their own names ; almost all were first made drunk before they were enlisted ; and once enrolled, they are shut up in hideous holes called barracks, a word which you won’t find in Shakespeare, for the thing did not exist in his day nor for a hundred years afterwards. This town should be able to demand the demolition of its barracks and the organisation of its own contingent of the army.”

“ Good—very good,” said Brydges ; “ you will have to draw me up a scheme of enlistment ; state your reasons for pulling down the barracks, and be sure you lay it on thick when you come to the saving of expense.”

“ There is nothing more simple than that,” said Jack. “ Just imagine, it has been calculated that we might have improved our army and saved one hundred millions of pounds sterling in twenty-five years if a proposal made by Prince Albert to the Government of 1852 had been carried out !”

“ Work that out among the towns, and give the proportion that would fall to Mulberry,” said the domineering Robert. “ The Emigration question,” he continued, “ is of vital importance. I think they will see through that without any paper being written upon it ; but you can draw up one if you like and if you have any original ideas to communicate. What is your own profession ? ”

“ I have none,” said Jack.

“ No profession ? ” exclaimed Brydges, more in sorrow than in anger. “ You don’t work at anything ! ” he went on, in alarm ; “ then I am sorry to tell you that we cannot receive you.”

This was a blow, and at once Jack’s fearful looking forward to judgment was fulfilled ; he ventured to ask, in a low voice, and with an expression of pain on his good face—

“ Why not ? ”

"It is against the rules we laid down from the first that no one can belong to——"

"The Civil Guard," threw in Jack, who had heard of Estrid's word.

Brydges started to his feet. "The very title of our force," he exclaimed, in delight. "I have been hammering my brains for a name, there it is, and I think for that that they ought to take you in; but it is, I am afraid, a fatal drawback, for it is one of our fundamental rules that a man must work at something to be qualified for our service. How did you pick up that name? 'The Civil Guard,'" he again said, turning it over on his tongue like one who has found a fine wine.

Jack, who had kept his seat and was looking inex-pressibly sad, replied, "It was given by a lady, a friend of my sister's, who said that it exists in Spain."

"What exists?" enquired Brydges, eagerly.

"The Civil Guard. But it is purely a military organisa-tion."

"Well," said the Doctor, "this is a bad business, what can be done to qualify you for The Civil Guard?"

And Jack Newton looked the picture of a conscience-stricken wretch, not fit to live, and who felt himself beneath the contempt of the meanest working-man in Mulberry.

After Thyme and Strawless had done enough for one day, and in less than an hour had "scraped together a very tidy sum of sovereigns," Thyme, really carried out of himself with religious fervour and the "enthusiasm of humanity," as he thought it might be called, wanted someone to whom he could open his heart and pour out his joy. So he made straight for Brydges's house, and arrived there just as they were in the dilemma of finding a qualification for Jack Newton. They speedily told the parson what was the matter, and he being in a towering rage of holy zeal, and having more than his usual wits about him, said—

"Well, you are a landed proprietor, ain't you?"

"Of course I am," said Jack, rising, and looking an appeal to the Doctor. But the Doctor thought that that would not hold water, and that it was a mere evasion of the rule; he promised, however, to consider it, and would do his best to

procure him an appointment in the "Civil Guard" he said with emphasis, turning to Thyme.

"Ah, you have told him," said Thyme, turning to Jack. "That was Estrid," he continued, turning to Brydges; on which Brydges expressed his desire to know that lady.

Then Thyme told them what he had been about, and handed his memorandum book to Brydges, which contained more than a page of the names of some of the wealthiest men in the town, who had subscribed "their thousands" for the new church.

Brydges handed back the small book to the clergyman with a sigh, and said, going to ring a bell,—

"It is a painful subject to think about, but it forces itself on one every day and at every fresh turn of one's life, that it is only money made by vile means that can be thus picked up in the streets when anything of this sort is to be done. Cathedrals are built now on barrels of stout. The Memorial Theatre to Shakespeare at Stratford-on-Avon is not built on the loves of Englishmen and the happy smiles and tears of Englishwomen, but on beer; and this new church in the grand old Forest of Melford will be built on gin, or cotton waste, or sized calico, or coloured wools. Bring in some tea," he added, as a servant here appeared in the room.

They all dined at Strawless's house on the appointed day, and the only notable occurrence was that a telegram from London was received by Quicksett while they were at dinner, for the telegraph office in Mulberry works as if it were part of the human system. If a messenger discovers that a man to whom he carries a message is dining out, he will inquire at that house, and hunt him up, and deliver that message, "as sure as death."

Telegram as it was, however, Quicksett was too delightfully occupied, or too well-bred, to open it, so he put it in the side pocket of his evening coat. It was from his superior in office, recalling him to town at once—for Jack Newton, after the ladies had risen, had reminded Quicksett of his missive, and then he could read it.

Newton had accepted the Strawless invitation for himself and his sister chiefly for the purpose of observing for himself

on what terms of intimacy Harriet stood in the mind of Tom Strawless. The Vicar of Wincote's reasons were of a more mingled kind. Amongst them there might have been a desire to measure himself once again against the surreptitious vendor of gin, but of this opportunity he did not avail himself, so occupied was he in glancing at the happiness evidently enjoyed by Quicksett and the lady who sat next him at dinner.

When the elder Strawless was made aware of the contents of Quicksett's telegram, he was mightily pleased with himself that he had not burnt his map, or tampered with its surface, or made himself obnoxious to Stephen Bond; and so pleased was he with his virtues, or with the certainty of Quicksett's removal from the field of action, that he ordered Tom Strawless to get a bottle of the hundred guinea port, and they would drink a parting glass to Mr. Quicksett, and so heal or cover up any little sores which might have broken out among them. But before the valuable wine had gone through the ceremonies needed to get it to its destined haven, Arthur Quicksett rose from the table and went and joined the ladies.

CHAPTER XX.

"As a little girl was playing round me one day with her white frock over her head, I laughingly called her *Pishashee*, the name which the Indians give to their white devil. The child was delighted with so fine a name, and ran about the house crying to anyone she met, *I am the Pishashee! I am the Pishashee!* Would she have done so had she been wrapt in black, and called *witch* or *devil* instead? No; for, as usual, the reality was nothing, the sound and colour everything. But how many grown-up persons are running about the world quite as anxious as was the little girl to get the name of Pishashees?"—JULIUS C. HARE.

JACK NEWTON, as he was always called—and why so called can only be explained by the fact that he was never called

anything else—had not mentioned to his sister Harriet the subject of conversation between himself and Salter Thyme. But he had taken more notice of her, and the more pains he took to amuse or gratify her, the greater was his reward. And yet the chief, one might almost say the only, exertion he made on her behalf was to observe her ways and wait upon and serve her in matters in which she had been accustomed to help herself. And Jack was delighted at the silent but delighted acquiescence with which Harrie received his attentions.

Perhaps she thought that they would not continue, and yet who knows but that this silent gratitude was the deep design of her practical mind for making them sure and permanent. One thing is certain, the more Jack served his sister the better he loved her; and if they wouldn't have him in the Civil Guard, he need never be without pleasant occupation as long as he consented to serve his sister Harrie. As for her caring for Tom Strawless, he would not insult her by even supposing such a thing.

One morning, as they sat at breakfast, not long after the dinner at Strawless's, the following conversation took place between brother and sister :—

HARRIET—"Jack, I want you to go with me to Cupid's Alley, wherever it is, in Mulberry."

JACK—"What on earth has put such a thing into your head?"

HARRIET—"Estrid Fount went there, and it made her ill; I want to see what the place is like, and if it would have the same effect on me."

JACK—"But, my child, you mustn't think of a thing so monstrous; Miss Fount could not possibly have known where she was going when she made the acquaintance of that filthy den."

HARRIET—"All that I quite believe and indeed know, as far as one can know a thing one hears from Ethel Hillen. Estrid, whom you know I have got to love very much, went there with Mr. Thyme, and, by accident, she turned into this street or pudding bag, got suddenly surrounded by a mob of wicked wretches, turned very sick or faint, and got

so bewildered that she allowed herself to be carried to the wrong hotel, where she was found, after some fashion, by Henry Mackworth. Well, Jack, I want to go and see those wicked people."

JACK—"I'll be shot if you shall. Are you not satisfied with what Miss Fount has told you about them and what she suffered on their account?"

HARRIET—"Estrid was perfectly silent on the subject to all except Ethel, whom she entreated never to recall to her so painful a matter. It is not, Jack, because it is a horrible place, and the people wicked, that I want to see it or them—but you know Estrid has opened my eyes to many things, and there are some on which I cannot agree with her, and I am sure it is all on account of our being differently made, and I want to see what the difference in our make is, and I think I could find that out if I could go to this place, which, if it did not make her afraid, did make her very sick. She is willing to talk on anything, and does, and she knows very much; but this place and these people she refuses to have revived in her mind. Therefore you see, Jack, it is very important, and I must go."

On which Jack laughed heartily and gave Harriet a kiss on her cheek, and said she was always to command him in everything, and he would be her devoted slave; that, of course, we are all differently made, or there would be no fun in the world and no wisdom, and no tears and nobody to love us, but he would not take her to Cupid's Alley, "and that's flat," nor would he allow her to go if all the peacocks of the world were to harness themselves in gold and draw her there on a silver cloud.

She stood steadfastly regarding the thumb-nails of both her pretty little hands, and Jack put his hands into his pockets, looked at his sister's quiet and determined figure, and was smiling in her face as she raised hers to him and said in a constrained voice—

"You know well enough, Jack, that I shall go if I make up my mind, and I have made it up; and if you don't go with me, some one else will."

"When does your highness wish to go?" said Jack, still smiling.

"To-morrow," was the reply, and a few tears began to bubble in her eyes, which her brother noticed.

"And how do you propose to go?"

"In the saddle, of course."

"That's quite another pair of shoes," said Jack; "but remember we go, whether it is through wind, hail, or rain, and it is to be the last time and the only time."

"Very well. Do you dine at home to-night?"

"No; I am going to dine with the chief of the Civil Guard," said her brother, putting on a mock threatening look, as if to intimate that she had better take care in future, or she would not get what she wanted so easily.

Harrie Newton, however, was not a girl to be moved by threats, which her brother had discovered some time ago, but he could not discover to what purposes Harriet intended to put her experience of Cupid's Alley. It could be nothing but a freak, and whilst he had no wish to thwart her, it was his business to guard her against any evil which might result from her rash resolve. So he addressed himself to Brydges, whom he had no doubt would help him to the right way of showing to his sister that part of Mulberry which neither the Bishop and his clergy, the Corporation and the police, have been able to reform, to rebuild, or to destroy, and yet it is merely a *cul-de-sac* of forty small houses, twenty on each side, and occupied for the most part by women who, in one sense at least, may be compared to the lilies of the field.

When Newton informed Brydges of his sister's whim as he called it, he at first regarded Jack with a look of incredulity, followed by a short laugh, and then he said—

"Of course she does not know what she is about. How old is she?"

"About twenty-six," said her brother, "I thought of riding down the court, turning when we reached the bottom, and so get the thing over in a minute."

"It can of course," said the Doctor, "be easily managed; I'll make my Serjeant go to the place and wait till you come. None of the poor creatures will show their faces, and your sister will escape seeing what, of course, she should never be allowed to look upon."

"I am greatly indebted to you," said Jack, who had begun to form a reverence for Brydges, as for a superior being.

"Your sister must have a dash of Lady Godiva in her veins," said the Chief of the Civil Guard with a smile, and all that Jack could say was that Harriet had been allowed to have her own way from a child, and no doubt was a little spoiled.

The next morning Jack and Harriet came riding together into Mulberry at the hour agreed upon, and it was evident that she knew nothing and apparently thought nothing about the place or the people, the sight of whom had struck terror, mingled with shame and horror, into Estrid's heart, and perhaps it was only an idle curiosity on Harriet's part that made her wish to visit Cupid's Alley, although it might have sprung from a thirst to compete with Estrid in the article of courage.

As they drew near to the ill-famed court it was a source of great pleasure to Newton to see Brydges slowly coming towards them down the Dean's Walk. At the corner of this main street and Cupid's Alley was what was used as a tavern by day and a gin-palace at night, called "Cupid's Arrow"; and as Newton and his sister turned their horses into the Alley, who should come out of the "Arrow" but Mr. T. Strawless. The Alley, which had a very considerable incline from Dean's Walk, was paved with heavy granite and much polished with unhallowed feet. Strawless had caught sight of Miss Newton's face whilst he was inside the "Arrow," and he rushed out, caught suddenly her horse's head, and would have turned him back, saying in a hurried and fearful voice—

"You must not come here; this is no thoroughfare."

But hardly had he time to say this when the horse, surprised on the slippery, sloping stones, missed his footing and fell, and Miss Newton with him. Horse and rider fell on the stones and lay there for a brief space, and until her brother could dismount and come to her help. No sooner had some of the denizens of Cupid's Alley seen the lady fall than they ran to her. "Fetch some water," cried one;

"Run for a doctor," said another; "Carry her inside here," was the suggestion of a third. Happily Brydges came up, and aided by his serjeant, proceeded to minister to Harriet, who was still lying on the ground, and as yet had not opened her eyes.

"Keep back the crowd," said Brydges to the serjeant.

But it was more easily said than done. The crowd of passers-by pressed down the court, and those who belonged to the court pressed round the fallen lady, whom Brydges had not yet seen fit to remove.

"Stand back, pray stand back; the lady must have air," said Brydges gently to the people, chiefly women, who were pressing round.

At last Harriet turned over as if she were in bed, opened her eyes, and saw herself hemmed in by a crowd of strange faces, but her brother was by her side and helped her to rise.

"I am not hurt in the least, Jack," she said, but on the instant fell into her brother's arms, and but for him would have fallen again to the ground. They then carried her inside one of the houses, where she remained until such time as she could walk to a carriage, which had been sent for from the Paynim Hotel.

"I am most thankful to you," she said to the girl in whose house she had recovered from her swoon, "my brother will call and see you," and with that she walked out of Cupid's Alley into the Dean's Walk.

The shameful girl made no answer, and looked like one who had received, rather than conferred a service.

"Won't you come with us?" said Newton to Brydges as their carriage was driving off.

He answered, "There is no need, but if you will allow me, I'll ride over in the morning."

"We shall expect you," and Jack and his sister drove home, leaving their horses at the Paynim.

This was the first time that Brydges had seen Harriet, and he thought that her brother must be mistaken when he talked of her being something like twenty-six, she looked more like a girl of sixteen. He noticed that she spoke very gently to the girls who were about her, and to the one in

whose house she had rested, and was evidently a young lady of some character, with the courage of inexperienced youth. "But," he mused, "if experience be not thrust upon the young, and is not otherwise prematurely obtained, the courage might remain, or at least be not vitiated. Not in Cupid's Alley, however, will ladies find a field for their courage; and this one is too young for that kind of thing, and, although her own nature might not give way in the face of contamination, she could never be strong enough to save one of her own sex from despair—women seldom are." Still Brydges, as he confessed to himself, did not know everything. "The vices most easy of remedy," he continued, "are those which depend upon locality and custom for their propagation; and if these unhappy women had friends, or if our best men would turn their thoughts in the direction of a reform of Cupid's Alley, it might possibly be done by reforming it altogether, but not otherwise."

When Tom Strawless told his mother where he had that morning met Miss Newton, she let fall on to the carpet a goblet of some valuable lotion intended for internal application, and said—

"It was impossible!" then "that it was abominable!" and lastly, "she could not understand it!" and went and replaced the glass which she had broken and the liquor she had spilt.

"What were thou up to in Cupid's Alley?" enquired Tom Strawless's mother.

"I was looking after some things at the 'Arrow,' and caught sight of her as she was turning into the Alley," answered her son.

"Well, and what happened?" For if Mrs. Strawless was unable to explain or mend a thing, she always insisted on knowing all about it.

Her son gave some account of Harriet's fall, and how she had to be brought home in a carriage, on which his mother declared that it was a pretty kettle of fish.

Dr. Brydges breakfasted half-an-hour earlier than was his wont the next morning and rode to Newton Holme.

He was met by Jack, who was standing outside as Brydges came up.

"How is your sister, Mr. Newton?" inquired the Doctor.

And Jack, who noticed the formal inquiry, replied, "Good morning, Doctor; glad to see you. My sister is quite well."

"At least, I suppose, she says so," said Brydges, dismounting. "Have you seen her; is she downstairs?"

"Oh, yes," said Jack; "we have just done breakfast. She seems all right enough."

"Has she talked over the affair of yesterday?" inquired the Doctor.

"Not a word," was the answer.

"I must see her," said Brydges, who with the least tinge of professional mystery had a knack of procuring to have his own way.

They went inside, and Jack took Brydges into the breakfast-room, introducing him to his sister with "Harrie, here's the Doctor come to see you."

Contrary to her custom, Miss Newton was sitting in a low arm-chair, her back to the window which looked on to the garden, her feet close to the fender, and reading.

She did not rise to meet the Doctor, but closed her book and thanked him for his services of the day before.

The Doctor, unbidden, took a chair, on which Jack Newton hastened to apologise for his neglect, of which Brydges took not the least notice, but regarding the lady before him with much attention, he said to her, "Have you, Miss Newton, any recollection of how you came to fall yesterday?"

"Oh, yes," she answered without hesitation, but with a slightly heightened colour on her bright face. "Mr. Strawless suddenly appeared from somewhere and caught hold of my horse's head. There was no reason at all for my falling. My brother did not fall, and I am a better rider than he; ain't I, Jack?"

"I am the head of this house, and refuse to acknowledge my inferiority in anything," was the unexpected reply, which roused Harriet's attention, who observed her brother's good-natured smile.

Brydges was one of those natural men out of whom there goes virtue unconsciously, if there be present the requisite

attraction to call it forth. From the first time they had met, Brydges had exerted an uncommon influence over Jack Newton. He had opened his eyes, loosened his tongue, and set going the wheels of his whole being ; and over all this there was the man himself standing like a watchful experimenter, to see that the machinery worked according to its design.

" You know Mr. Strawless, I suppose ? " said the Doctor, addressing Harriet in a gentle, harmless, and perfectly quiet way.

" A little," was the answer ; but there came on Harriet's face a blush, of which the experienced eye of the Chief of the Civil Guard knew full well the meaning.

In the most unceremonious manner Dr. Brydges took hold of Miss Newton's wrist, and the beautiful colour did not leave Harriet's face, and Jack Newton, as he stood by and saw all that, declared to himself that if Harrie ever found her master he would be in the likeness of the man now holding her by the hand.

" There's nothing the matter, I think," said the Doctor. " I suppose you found a little bruise here and there ? "

" The very least," said Harriet in a cheerful voice, " on my left elbow ; " but in extending her right hand to touch the injured part a sudden twitch of pain distorted her face. She became quite pale, her eyes closed, her head rolled on one side, and her right hand moved convulsively.

Jack pressed hastily forward, as if to take his sister in his arms, but Brydges stopped him by a gesture.

" Stand," he said, " at the head of the chair," which the Doctor proceeded to incline backward. After a brief space the colour returned to the pale lips, and the lady opened her eyes.

" Where was the pain, Miss Newton ? " inquired the Doctor, on which the right hand in answer was raised a little.

Brydges took the hand in his own, gently moved the fingers, but got no response. " It's not a bone," he said to Jack. How he knew so as to speak so positively, Jack could not comprehend.

The truth is that Miss Newton felt no pain in her hand, and if she intended to convey to the Doctor that the pain was there she told a deliberate mechanical fib. The pain was in her side and might be a broken rib, and then she would have to go to bed and be examined, and—and—she could almost have cried with vexation. Then she thought that she had slept all night well enough, she had bathed that morning as usual, she had dressed herself, she had poured out the tea, and there could not be anything very much the matter. This fainting, however, was very provoking.

Whilst these reflections were passing through Miss Newton's mind, the Doctor was preparing a small dose of some magic liquid that a lady's thimble could hold, which the lady took; and after a little while the Doctor was quite certain that no ribs were broken, and the worst that had happened was a little stiffness from a flesh bruise, but she would not be able to ride for several days.

Here was a case in which the Doctor claimed no fee, nor did the patient or her brother offer to pay any, and what the charge for that visit might be perhaps will not be known until the great Day of Account.

As the Doctor was mounting his horse and saying good-bye to Jack Newton, there rode up to the door a young man, the fashion of whose countenance was not pleasing, and when he demanded—"I want to know how Miss Newton is?" and her brother answered, in an indifferent tone—"She is quite well, thank you," the young man's face did not improve in appearance.

"You are Dr. Brydges, I think?" said the young man, addressing himself to the Chief of the Civil Guard, who replied with very cold courtesy—

"Your name is Strawless, I think?"

"It is, and what of it?"

"Only this, my man, that horses are very intelligent creatures when they are well managed, but dangerous to human life if they are ignorantly handled. I saw you seize Miss Newton's horse yesterday in a very unskilful fashion, and it is not to you she is indebted for having no broken bones." Then, turning to Jack, he said—

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"Well, good-bye, Mr. Newton : I shall return in the morning."

"We shall be glad to see you," responded Jack, and Brydges raised his hat in acknowledgment as he was galloping away.

"Can I see Miss Newton ?" inquired Strawless.

"I think you had better not," was the laconic answer, which the surly youth showed no sign of receiving as final, but stood stock still, intent, apparently, on waiting until Mr. Stanley Hillen, who was seen approaching, should come up.

Jack went down the steps to meet the little old gentleman, and having shaken hands conducted him inside, he then gave a nod to Strawless, saying "Good morning," and closed the door.

Strawless dismounted, tied his horse to the railings, and rang the door bell.

It was answered by Jack Newton who said, making the index finger of his right hand as stiff as a finger post, and pointing in the direction of Mulberry : "You cannot see my sister to-day—there is nothing serious the matter but she must remain quite quiet."

And master Tom Strawless felt that he had placed himself in a very humiliating position, and was thoroughly at a loss what to do or say—nor did it occur to him to break Jack Newton's nose.

"Well, what is all this we hear ?" enquired Mr. Hillen of Newton after he got inside. "I have been sent over to enquire after your sister who we are told was thrown from her horse yesterday and half killed."

"She was not thrown," said Jack, "but her horse fell through the unfortunate interference of that youthful Strawless, and she fell and got a heavy bruise, nothing more, unless she got a fright at the same time."

"Nothing serious then, you are quite sure?" said Mr. Hillen.

"Nothing ; at least, so says Dr. Brydges, who has been to see her this morning," answered Jack and added, "She is rightly punished for her obstinacy," which he proceeded to explain to Mr. Hillen.

" My dear Newton, it is permitted to the old to love, and to confess their loves; let me not cease to love you, as I shall if you cherish so vulgar a prejudice; on your ground I must have been doing something worthy of stripes, for we designed you to join us to-morrow in the forest with your sister, and lo! she cannot come, and we are made sorrowful."

"Pray don't tell Harrie, she will be sure to go if Miss Fount and Ethel go, although Brydges has told her that she must not ride for several days." Jack Newton was perhaps a little nervous on account of his sister, or his newly awakened esteem for her had made him timid.

" Throw physic to the dogs; let me tell her, it may do her all the good in life," said Mr. Hillen.

Then they went in to see Harrie, who was sitting in an arm-chair, which had been securely placed at an angle of repose by Dr. Brydges, reading a book which now and then made her smile.

(*To be continued.*)





Hunting with the Nizam's Cheetahs.

NOT far from the city of Hyderabad there is an extensive undulating plain covered with coarse grass, studded with clumps of low date palms, and with here and there,—breaking the evenness of the ground,—piles of grey weather-worn rock, of the gneiss formation common to this part of the Deccan, often so gigantic in size, fantastic in shape, and picturesque as to the arrangement of one mass upon another. Emerald-green fields of young rice skirt the ground, now and again a strip of russet-coloured *raggie*, and thick topes of shady trees, the huts of a native village, and a large tank of water, complete the picture. The spot is called Sirrinnuggur; it is the deer-park of His Highness the Nizam, and where his black buck and antelope are strictly and religiously preserved. The crack of the rifle but seldom disturbs their browsings—the cry of the hound never—but when either the herds require thinning, or more often when sport is wanted, then the hunting cheetahs are put into requisition, and a deer-chase, a pastime which your Hyderabad noble greatly affects, is indulged in.

The natural history of the hunting cheetah (*Felis jubata*) is, of course, well known. He is an elegant and peculiarly graceful creature, taller and more slender, swifter of foot than his near relation, the *Felis pardus*, or common cheetah, who, by the way, generally retains the name of cheetah, leopard being the one by which *Felis jubata* is distinguished. Unlike his brother *Pardus*, *Jubata* is unable to climb trees;

his paws are longer, claws less retractile—he is marked with black spots and has somewhat of a crested mane—hence *Jubata*. He is docile and capable of thorough taming, and may now and again be seen quietly walking through the crowded bazaars of an Indian town, led with a thin cord by a keeper. It need hardly be said that his inborn instincts for the kind of pursuit for which he is kept have been fostered and sharpened by training and practice.

It is to witness a hunt with these cheetahs that a large party of us from the cantonment of Secunderabad are at Sirrinnuggur one cool December afternoon, and the chase over, we are to adjourn to Sir Salar Jung's villa hard by. We have reached the verge of the park in horsed or bullock conveyances, and there elephants await us. Down on their knees at a touch of the mahout's rod the huge beasts kneel, and into the howdahs on their backs we mount by means of ladders, the steps of which are uncomfortably far asunder, and necessitate some strain of muscle to reach. We move forward, bound for some knolls and rocks which command an uninterrupted view of the whole plain. Herds of deer are scattered about, lazily couching under the trees, or feeding upon the finer herbage on the margin of the pools. Two cradle-like native carts (hackeries) made of sticks and rope, each drawn by a small bullock, are hovering about in the distance, and each has lying down on its floor a hunting cheetah, hooded, fastened, and *dinnerless*. The chase begins. From our vantage ground we see one cart slowly and cautiously driven towards a herd of antelopes, and approaching them unseen and unnoticed. When within some forty or fifty yards the cart stops, a keeper jumps into it and slips and unhoods the cheetah, who is down on the turf in the twinkling of an eye. He sees the grazing animals, and forthwith he begins to work towards them. Step by step stealthily he advances, stalking every inch with measured, cat-like footfall; and taking advantage of every inequality of the ground, every tuft of grass, and every little boulder of rock, to cover his approach. Pace by pace onwards—now a dead stop—down for a moment he crouches—then a tremendous bound, and he is flying, feet through the air into

the very midst of the herd. But *Felis Jubata* has missed his mark, he has jumped a few inches short of the buck he had selected. Away like the wind the scared antelopes skedaddle in all directions. The cheetah pursues the one he had aimed at, follows it for some distance, but when he sees the fleet beast gaining on him foot by foot, and that he can't readily get again within springing distance, he suddenly gives in, stands still, is retaken, rehooded, replaced in his cart, castigated, and moved off the field. Seldom, we are told, does failure like this occur; the animal is sick, lazy, vexed in spirit—his keeper has a ready excuse at his tongue's end for his shortcomings—but be the cause what it may we are disappointed of a run, and the deer got off scot free.

But meantime another hackery with another cheetah is moving on the flank of another herd. Once more is repeated the same wariness of approach; again there is the same slipping and uncowling; again the same stealthy stalking, and again the same instinctive seeking of bush, break, or rock, for concealment of advance. This time, however, *Jubata's* star is in the ascendant, and the deer is a gone coon. A large fat buck—the consort of many does, the pater-familias of numerous fawns, and who has been browsing a little apart from his household, has attracted the cheetah's attention. Inch by inch, he creeps nearer and nearer to him, behind a granite boulder he lays crouched for an instant, then on to its crest he crawls, and now with an overwhelming leap he pounces at the prey. But the buck has seen his dread enemy just in time, and flies for dear life over the scrub, over the turf, among the palms. The cheetah follows close, now gaining, now losing ground. The chase is most exciting, and from our elephants' backs we see every yard of it. Now it seems certain the deer, fleeter of foot, will escape; his springs and bounds are telling on the heavier and slower cheetah. But no; the "stay" of that animal is greater, and his thirst for blood insatiable. For some minutes more the hunt continues; the deer doubles back from a tope of trees, and comes into the open; —a fall in the lay of the land gives the cheetah a momentary advantage; he sees it—one, two leaps, and he is on the deer's

back and pins him fastly down. There is a cry, a struggle, an endeavour to bring the sharp horns into action ; but the weight and strength of *Jubata* is overpowering, and it is all up with the lord of that herd—the hinds are widows, and the fawns fatherless. The keepers come up; they cut the throat of the dying stag, they feed with his life's blood *Jubata* aforesaid, who now releases his hold, and suffers himself to be detached from his quarry. It is not a pretty sight to look upon the crimson-stained face and jaws of the cheetah as he is noosed and led back to his cart, nor is the bleeding neck of the deer a more inviting spectacle. Our ladies don't like it—they become pale and faint;—but smelling bottles, and just a *soufflé* of sherry from tiny flasks, conjure back colour and circulation. One more hunt, and the same scene, which I have endeavoured to sketch, is gone through with much the same excitement and with the same death throes of buck or doe. Then we move on to Sir Salar's villa ;—villa !—a little palace, a mile or so away. Delightfully sited is it amid groves and shrubberies ; cool with splashing fountains, gay with tropical and English flowers. The busy minister seldom finds time to retire to its sylvan quietness ; but he "loans" it, as the Yankees say for pic-nics, and more often to Benedicts and Beatrices, when priest and ring have done their office. Every bush smells, consequently, of orange blossoms ; grains of rice stick to the gravelled walks ; the frosting of bride cake whitens the leaves ; and fragments of the rich indigestible compound itself adhere to chunans and brick and mortar. Its servants are sleek and fat with the open-handed largesse of bridegrooms, and it is for brides' free gifts that gardeners (*mahlies* is the generic Indian name) cultivate gesnerias, jasmins and white-coloured petals generally. Here it is that the Nawab's hospitality right royally meets us this afternoon. Here it is that we drink his champagne and Burgundy, and eat his turkeys, capons, pillaus, and curries. Here it is that the Nizam's band has been sent with Offenbach's, Strauss's, or Godfrey's dance music, and here it is that we revel and make merry after Hunting with the Nizam's Cheetahs.

D. SASOON.



THE FACE IN THE GLASS.

A Tale of All Hallows Eve.

BY ALICE EVÉZARD.

CHAPTER VI.—(*continued.*)



was thoroughly roused then, and forgot everything but my anger at his insolence.

"And who and what are you?" I said, slowly and deliberately.

"Mr. Sylvester's *beau ideal* of a son-in-law at present," he answered, with a sneering laugh that turned my very heart cold. "You see, my dear young lady, I know a little more of the world than you do. Mr. Wynne never amuses your father; I do. Mr. Wynne is audacious enough to have opinions of his own, and even to contradict your father's; I never do. If he chose to say that the moon was made of green cheese, or that you were extremely plain, or, in short, any outrageous thing, I should agree with him—with mental reservations of course, but still I should agree with him."

"Or in other words," I interrupted hotly, "you are treacherous and deceitful, and Mr. Wynne is trustful and frank."

"Just so, if you prefer strong language, and (to finish your speech for you) consequently Mr. Sylvester thinks me perfection, and does not appreciate Mr. Wynne."

Alas! I knew it only too well. My father did not appreciate Maurice, and Captain Chester, with Machiavellian

ingenuity, would turn this to account. I felt in utter despair. Captain Chester saw his advantage, and smiled sarcastically, and I could say no more, for my father came into the room with his wife, who was looking majestic in black velvet and diamonds. Nothing was said about the flowers, but I saw a quick look pass between Captain Chester and his sister, and I felt that my stepmother would, in her cold, calculating way, fight her brother's battles.

It was with a heavy heart that I stepped into the carriage. The ball-room was very full when we arrived, for we were late.

Maurice managed to meet us on the stairs and whisper to me, "You will dance this waltz with me, Judith?"

"Pardon me, she is engaged to me for this," said Captain Chester coolly.

"Indeed, I am not," I was beginning indignantly, when my father, who was standing near, said abruptly—

"Judith, you forget that you are speaking to your mother's brother and my guest."

Maurice had heard neither my protest nor my father's reproof; he had answered nothing to Captain Chester's speech, but with a look that went to my heart, he turned away at once. I bit my lips to keep in the rebellious words that were rising, for I knew they would do no good, and only anger my father more against Maurice, so without a word I took Captain Chester's arm. I do not know how I went through that waltz, I was so bewildered and unhappy. I felt myself caught in such a coil of treacherous falsehood which I could not disentangle without bringing trouble upon Maurice, that I knew not where to turn. Ah! how bitterly I repented the proud, hasty speech I had made to him when he wanted to replace my ring. But for that he might have told me then (what I knew well already) that he cared for me, and all this would never have happened. Aye, I knew it well, although I had fancied I doubted him for a while. It was only fancy. In the depth of my heart I knew well that he loved me, and I knew also that I could never love anyone else; and now he evidently thought that I was engaged to Captain Chester!

The dance was over at last, and my partner led me to the

large conservatory that opened from one end of the ball-room. No one was there, and leading me to the further end, where a bench was almost concealed by some orange trees, he made me sit down. I was quite passive, and I obeyed him. He sat down beside me, and began in a low voice—

“Miss Sylvester, you must know what I have to say, for I have been saying it for the last two months. I love you, and I have been trying to make you love me.”

“Have you indeed?” I interrupted; “then you have chosen a somewhat incomprehensible way of doing it.”

“I love you!” he repeated, unheeding my interruption; “and when first I saw you in the library here I vowed that I would woo and win you. I knew, by some fatal instinct, that you would not love me, whatever I might do, and I saw, too, that you loved another; so, as you know, I wooed your father, who is more easy to be won than you are. This very day he consented to my entreaty that I might ask you to be my wife. Nay, do not look so scornful, but hear me out. I suggested that you might be hard to win, and he replied—‘Tell her it is her father’s wish.’ I ventured to say that even that might not sufficiently influence you, and he added—‘If she refuses you, Chester, I disown her. She is no longer a daughter of mine if she refuses to do my bidding, and that, too, in a matter so just and suitable in every way. You may tell her so,’—which you perceive, my dear Miss Sylvester, I have done. I repeat that I love you. I think your hatred of me has made me love you all the more, and if you refuse me I vow I will move heaven and earth but I will win you at last.”

“Heaven,” I repeated slowly; “what have you to do with Heaven, Captain Chester?”

“You shall teach me,” he said, changing voice and manner completely. “Judith, take pity upon me, I never loved any one until I saw you. Yes, I know I am very wicked, and you think me so. Well, will not you undertake my reformation? I might become anything if your hand would condescend to guide me, your voice teach me truth and goodness as it has already taught me love. Judith, say that you will.”

Captain Chester's whole manner had altered, the piercing black eyes were softened, the sardonic smile had vanished, and in its stead, was a sad, pleading look that almost made me sorry for him.

"Judith, speak," he repeated entreatingly; "say that you will try to love me."

"I am surprised at your presumption," I said at last. "Captain Chester, listen to me. I cannot go against my conscience whatever may come of it; your threats and my father's are alike powerless to persuade me; he can disown and disinherit me if he chooses, and I have no doubt that he will do so at your instigation, but that will not influence me in the slightest degree; it will pain me very much (it pains me now to think that a complete stranger should come between my father and myself), but it will do no more; with all your 'shrewdness' you cannot read Judith Sylvester's character, she would die rather than promise to love and honour a man whom she thoroughly dislikes and despises."

"That is your final decision; then you refuse absolutely to grant my request?"

"I do, most decidedly, and I repeat that I am surprised at your audacity."

"Thank you," he returned calmly; "now I know what to do."

"You may do your worst, Captain Chester, nothing will alter my decision."

"We shall see; I am determined that you shall be my wife, by fair means, if possible; you have only yourself to blame if I resort to unfair ones."

"And you, sir, shall answer to me for annoying that lady," said a well-known voice, and Oliver Wynne appeared from amongst the orange trees. "I heard your last words to Miss Sylvester, and I am here to protect her!"

Captain Chester folded his arms and leant indolently back against the bench with his eyes fixed on Oliver, whose frank, honest face was glowing with indignation.

"My dear fellow," he said sneeringly, "have you never learnt wisdom? Believe me, you should never interfere in lovers' quarrels."

Oliver stood aghast.

"Judith, is this true?" he said to me.

But I had no voice to answer, my strength was fast failing me; twice I essayed to say "no," but the words would not come. Oliver turned away.

"Poor Maurice," I heard him mutter as he disappeared among the trees."

Captain Chester turned to me—

"Thank you," he said mockingly, "for thus twice corroborating my words. Silence is sometimes more eloquent and convincing than speech. Allow me to take you back to the ballroom."

I rose in silence and took his arm, and then I made up my mind that anything would be better than to endure this insolence. I would tell all to Maurice when we danced together, he would be sure to ask me for the next waltz. But Maurice did nothing of the kind, he danced with Grace instead, and he did not come near me again until supper time.

Then Maud whispered to me—

"Let Mr. Livingston take you in."

I assented hastily, for I saw Captain Chester coming towards me with my father, and I was glad to take Mr. Livingston's arm to escape my tormentor.

CHAPTER VII.

MAURICE sat next to me with Maud, who had evidently been hatching a little plot.

"Do you remember last New Year's Eve, Judith?" she said, in a low voice.

"Yes," I said, "I do."

"I thought you had forgotten it, Miss Sylvester," said Maurice, coldly.

I started. "Miss Sylvester!" Ah, Captain Chester's

falsehood had begun to work ! I could see him, at the other end of the table, watching me with his sardonic smile.

" Maurice," I said, hastily, " what is the matter with you ? Why do you call me Miss Sylvester ? "

" I have no right to call you anything else," he said gloomily ; " your future life will be very far apart from mine, As Captain Chester's wife you will, of course, live at home in England, as he will retire without doubt ; I am going abroad next month. Our parting may as well begin at once, and I must learn to forget that Judith Sylvester is anything more to me than Captain Chester's wife."

" That I shall never be !" I said, decidedly. " I did not suppose you could think so badly of me, Maurice, as to believe that wicked man's falsehood."

" Is it false, then, Judith ? "

" Of course it is," I said, indignantly ; " but, Maurice, you must promise me you will not try to punish him for his falsehood."

Maurice did not answer ; he rose and offered me his arm. Maud gave Mr. Livingston a comical look.

" I suppose we must put up with each other," she said ; and I heard him say, in a significant tone—

" I wish you could make up your mind to it."

I lost the rest, for Maurice took me to the ball-room, and the others lingered behind. My explanation with Maurice was, however, not fated to be finished that night. My step-mother came up to me directly after supper, and, telling me she felt ill, asked me to come home at once. Of course I could not refuse, and, though I half suspected Captain Chester of having some hand in it, I saw that Mrs. Sylvester did look pale and weary. My father, who worshipped her, was all anxiety directly, and we left at once. Not one word was spoken as we drove home. Captain Chester sat immovable, with a weary look on his face which I had never seen there before. I escaped to my room as soon as I could, after receiving a very decided negative to my offers of assistance. I felt tired and worn out, and fell asleep directly I laid my head on my pillow.

The following morning was bright and clear. A riding

party had been arranged some days before by the Wynnes, who had friends staying with them, and early in the morning they came for me. Captain Chester (who had, from politeness, been asked to join us) came too. I was mounted on my own favourite horse, "Faust," a bright, glossy chestnut, rather fiery as to temper, but always obedient to my voice. Captain Chester was to try a new horse which my father had presented to him as a Christmas gift. It was a beautiful creature, black as a raven's wing ; but there was an uneasy look about it that I did not like.

Captain Chester was a good rider (indeed, he did most things well), and when the horses were brought round he mounted his new acquisition in an instant, although it was plunging and rearing fearfully. My father came out to see us start, and Maurice said to him, unthinkingly—

"That horse of Captain Chester's looks vicious, Mr. Sylvester : he has an unpleasant trick of laying back his ears."

"I chose him, sir!" retorted my father, in a "There is no more to be said" tone ; and Maurice accordingly said no more, but he rode round to my side, and whispered—

"Keep away from that horse, Judith, for if he turns out as I think he will he may startle 'Faust.'"

I promised to try ; but it was easier said than done. True, Maurice kept close to my side on his own horse, who, though fiery like "Faust," was not vicious ; but, ride as fast as I would, Captain Chester kept up with me on the other side.

There were about a dozen of us altogether, and we took the road to Aston Castle, an old ruin some five miles off. It was an exhilarating morning, and my companions, with the exception of Maurice, were in high spirits. I determined to throw off the depression that last night's scene in the conservatory had left on my mind, and I succeeded in appearing light-hearted ; but it was hard work. I was thinking in my heart, while my lips jested with my friends, of my father's stern nature, and the certainty that he would carry out his decision if—as I was resolved to do—I persisted in my refusal of Captain Chester's hand. I had but my father : he was the only relation left me ; and if he turned against me what should I do ? It was true that he had never cared

much for me since his second marriage ; but to lose even the semblance of interest which he sometimes showed seemed very hard. The threatened loss of fortune I did not care for ; it was the estrangement from my father, the loss of the dear old home that I had known and loved from infancy—these were the things that saddened me.

We reached the Castle without accident, although "Faust" was extremely impatient and fidgetty all the way. He was evidently uneasy at the close proximity of the black horse, who indulged in a good many little eccentricities on the road—such as standing on his hind legs, and giving unexpected jumps—which brought my heart to my lips each time. Well, we arrived safely, rode round the old ruined walls, and made plans for picnics there when the summer came, and the dreary old dungeon into which we peeped suggested Mrs. Norton's "Lady of La Garage" to someone, who repeated the beautiful prologue to it. I never could hear it without emotion, and to-day it saddened me still more than usual. Maud saw it, and—herself in wild spirits—sought to divert my thoughts. "She insisted," she said, "upon rousing up the old owls who lived in the ruined keep." So she clapped her hands and called out, Oliver and Mr. Livingston joining in, until I began to fear that the horses would all run away, for "Faust" was already so excited that even my voice failed to quiet him. Suddenly from an old hollow tree, just behind the spot where Captain Chester was with difficulty holding in his horse, a large white owl flew out just over the black horse's ears, and disappeared among the ruins. The horse gave one snort of agonised fear, and then tore away, over the low, broken wall, and into the road beyond. Almost before I realised what had happened, "Faust"—in a mad fit of fright, that heeded neither my voice nor my hand—tore after him ; and I, unprepared as I was for his sudden start, fell off. I gave one cry—

" Maurice, help me !" as I felt myself falling, and then my senses failed me, and I knew no more. I woke up with a sensation of being bruised all over, and I heard a voice say—

"Thank God, she is alive."

Maurice was bending over me, and Maud was sobbing close by. I looked up, bewildered, from Maurice's arm which supported my head. I was in a little low roofed room that I recognised as the kitchen in a cottage near Aston Castle, and close by, on a hastily arranged bed, lay Captain Chester, his eyes closed, his face ashen white. I tried to rise, but I was very much bruised by my fall, and my ankle was sprained so that I was forced to lean on Maud and Maurice, who raised me tenderly. "Is he?" I could not form the words, it was too awful to think that this man, who was my enemy, should be dead, beyond the reach of my forgiveness.

Maurice answered my unspoken question.

"He is alive, and that is all; we have sent for the doctor, but he cannot be roused. Speak to him, Judith," he added, with the generosity which always characterized him; "perhaps your voice may rouse him."

They helped me to the bedside, and placed me in a chair beside it.

"Captain Chester," I whispered trembling. He opened his eyes.

"You here, Miss Sylvester," he said in a feeble tone, "you have forgiven me then, now that I am dying. Yes, do not tremble, I know I am going, I shall not be in your way much longer. Ah! Judith you asked me last night 'what I had to do with Heaven;' I little thought then how and where those words would come back to me. Listen, I am going to tell you my story."

"I came down here with the firm determination of marrying the heiress of Sylvester Park—I had never seen you—but I was a ruined man, and deeply in debt. I had heard of you from my sister, and she proposed the scheme to which I assented. I lost my way, as you know, and found you in the library at Carlton Hall. I did not know who you were, but when I first saw you, I loved you. Yes, when I took your locket and ring I made up my mind that you, and only you, should be my wife. The next day I made the discovery that you were the heiress,

and at the same time I knew that your heart was already occupied. This only strengthened my determination—you might not love me, but you should be my wife nevertheless. I enlisted your father on my side, and by one or two ingenuous stories about Mr. Wynne, I succeeded in setting him against my rival. The rest you know. I can say no more. I might have succeeded in making you my unwilling wife, by dint of perseverance, but a stronger will than mine, which I never recognised till now, has put an end to my projects for ever. Can you say you forgive me, Judith. I have one excuse—I loved you, not with an unselfish love, but with blind, unreasoning madness. If you had loved me, I might have become anything you wished, but it was out of your power, and yet—well, well, everything is over now. Can you forgive?"

"Yes, indeed," I said with tears; "I do forgive you all; but it is not my forgiveness alone you should seek at such a time."

"I understand you," he said feebly; "but if you can forgive me, will not He forgive me too, even now? I cannot tell. I never thought of Him before, and now there is no time."

I was sobbing too bitterly to answer.

Maurice came forward and took his hand. "There is always time if we are penitent," he said. "His love never fails."

The dying man was too far gone to hear him.

I bent over the bed and caught the word—

"Forgive"

And then there was silence. He was in God's hands. Who might dare to judge him?

A long, wearing illness was the consequence to me of all these events, and my stepmother nursed me through it with a devotion which surprised everyone. Her brother's death had altered her completely, and the grief and sorrow she had gone through had thawed her frozen heart. She was as tender and loving to me as she had formerly been harsh.

It was a lovely day in spring when I was out of doors for

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the first time. My couch was wheeled out on the lawn at the back of the house, where snowy masses of hawthorn blossoms scented the air, and the tender green of the young leaves and the clear, sharp blue of the sky seemed to speak of happiness and hope. I lay indolently watching a pair of chaffinches, who were building their nest close by, when I heard a step on the gravel walk behind me, and Maurice came round from the front of the house. Our greeting was a very silent one, for our hearts were too full to speak much, but presently Maurice said—

"Judith, do you know what I have come to ask? Maud and John Livingstone are to be married in six weeks."

"And you want my consent to it?" I said, with an attempt at a joke, but failed signally.

"Yes," he answered, kneeling by my side, "I want your consent, dearest. I want you to become my wife at the same time."

"My father—" I said, faltering.

"Has consented at last. Mrs. Sylvester has pleaded successfully for me. You know how long I have loved you, Judith; cannot you learn to love me a little—is it so hard a lesson?"

He took my hand in his. I felt that his long, faithful love deserved much, aye, much more than the gift of a heart such as mine, which had once doubted his love for a few hours; but I said in broken accents—for I was still weak, and I felt almost too happy—

"It is no new lesson, Maurice—I learned it long ago."

Need I say more? My story is ended, for no outsiders care to hear of unclouded happiness, and my after-life was one of unutterable peace and joy; but even to this day I can never think of that All Hallows Eve without a shudder, and no persuasion could induce me to enter the library at Carlton Hall on the anniversary of that night.

THE END.



THREE SISTERS.

“ **W**HAT are you weaving, Sister ? ”
 “ Weaving the threads of Life—
Care and pale Sorrow, Sister,
 Battle and din and strife ;

Spinning and weaving, Sister,
 Mutt’ring a curse the while,
As the frail threads are tangled
 With a tear or a smile.”

“ Sparkling and shimmering, Sister,
 Whence come the threads of gold,
Gleaming and glistening, Sister,
 In every dusky fold ? ”

“ Ah ! I am weaving, Sister,
 Malice, and Crime, and Sin ;
But by my side our Sister
 Twists the thread as I spin.

See, in the blood-red colour
 Mingles a rainbow hue—
Envy’s pale shade is mingled
 With beams of azure blue.

Ever and ever, Sister,
 She seeks to do me wrong.
Help me ! To you, my Sister,
 Fair Life and Death belong.

When the thread glistens brightest,
 Rose and gold-mingled strand,
 Break it in twain, oh, Sister !
 Break with pitiless hand."

" What if I do your bidding,
 Cutting Life's thread in twain,
 Blotting the golden sunlight,
 Stilling sweet joy's refrain,

 And when the dawn shines fairest
 Cloud it in Night's dark gloom ?"
 " Sister, Death is the portal
 To Life beyond the tomb.

Grief cannot throw a shadow
 O'er the white, Death-crowned head :
 Let Grief be for the Living,
 Peace for the happy Dead."

R. A. LEA.





OLLA PODRIDA.

NOW that the end of the Paris Exhibition is near, we are in a good position to judge its results. As a success for the French Republic it is positive; as a complete failure for British commerce it is still more emphatic. Of course a crop of some kind or other will spring from the seed now sown, but it is also as sure that the bulk of the harvest will be reaped by French hands or machines. Other countries secure a few benefits, but England positively none. The reasons are manifest. Of all countries, England has least to gain from an Universal Exhibition. The world knows that her textiles and her steels are good, and she makes no improvement, while other nations creep nearer and nearer to her. There is not one single new thing in the whole British section, and there is no marked improvement in anything but the Art industries. For glass, china, Faience, and Sgraffito ware, England is decidedly first; and for *repoussé* silver work she is unequalled, notwithstanding the jurors' award. But mark, when the nations of the past neglected their manufactures for their arts, their end came swift and certain. The last records we have of Greece and Rome are engraved upon the splendid art treasures wrought on the eves of the deaths of those nations. But there is another reason why England will reap little benefit from the Paris Exhibition of '78. She has been badly represented. Jack, Tom, and Harry, whom nobody ever heard of, have bought goods and sent them as their own for show at Paris, while many of the best and oldest English

manufacturers have stayed away in disgust. The British Commission is responsible for this. About this Commission we have heard a great deal, we have read of its energy, its courtesy, and its popularity. Now, who are these over-lauded Commissioners? They consist of sixty gentlemen, commencing with four Dukes, several Earls, Lords, and Honorableables, but ending with a couple of dozen M.P.'s. The Prince of Wales is the President, and the only one of the lot worth more than a snap of the fingers. The executive of this Commission consists of a South Kensington secretary, half-a-dozen nobodies, two joint general superintendents, a suave, polished, and refined superintendent of machinery, and a score of boy-clerks. To these latter (spoken of by the girls at the English bar, as the "Commission Gentlemen,") has been deputed pretty well all the work of the Exhibition, of which there has been such a lot, that these young gentlemen—some of them very young—have had leisure for spending most of their afternoons and their pocket money at the said bar. In virtue of their position, they have given themselves airs and disgusted every sensible man who has witnessed their antics. One especially has made a fool of himself—a London builder's son glorying in the same Christian name as a dead great author. This young man, who puts on a sporting appearance, talks big of his "people," objects to be styled young, demands to be "esquired," and was exceedingly wroth when a friend of ours threatened to let his mamma know that he went up the river to the races on a Sunday. These are the representatives of England who have earned such praise. No wonder, then, that the British administration has been feeble and puerile.

It is but just, however, to add that there are one or two clerks on the British Commission who are not boys, who do not frequent the bars, and who really do deserve high praise for hard work and courtesy.

The English Bar at the Paris Exposition is called "*Le Bureau de la Commission Britannique.*"



St. James's Magazine.

NOVEMBER, 1878.

MARTINDALE'S MONEY.

A NOVEL.

By the Author of "Old as the Hills," "Kate Savage," &c., &c.

CHAPTER XXI.

WAITING AND WATCHING.

THE time was fast drawing near when Jim Travers was to receive his promised answer from Grace. In the meantime he had come of age. He had also come into his property—theoretically as yet, for the lawyers retained the control of his affairs, and he was informed that nothing could be settled until the Colonel, his late guardian, had given an account of a portion of the trust funds. Colonel Hawley seemed to resent such a requirement on the part of his nephew's advisers, but Jim, being young, was obliged to let the advisers have it all their own way. The Colonel had written him a long letter in a tone of deeply injured innocence, but it was not this alone which made Jim feel it impossible for him to put in an appearance at the Cedars. He had determined not to visit the neighbourhood of Hexbury until he could go straight into Grace Sumner's presence and learn his fate. The young fellow loved her with an honest, unselfish devotion, and as the month of February approached a restless anxiety took possession of him, which made him impatient of the daily round and common tasks of life.

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"Gerome was hale, but Gerome was pale,
For a lover he fain would be,
So Gerome he stood in the dusky wood,
And a sorrowful wight was he."

The Gerome in question waited not in the dusky wood, but in the busy scenes of London, yet he was not the less sorrowful on account of this difference of locality. He tried to be hopeful, and at times he succeeded, but then the despondent fit soon followed, and he saw in himself a victim of that enigmatical system by which, according to Miss Pecksniff's lover, "everybody seems to be somebody else's." Yes, he saw it all at a glance. He loved Grace, and Grace loved George Martindale, and Martindale was engaged to marry cousin Julia. He began by thinking of himself as the first puppet of fate, but had he been in a more observant frame of mind he might have discovered that somebody was quite ready and willing to offer the heart's affections at his own shrine. There was a gentle-eyed young lady, in the very house in which he was living, who saw with concern the abstracted and restless condition of mind with which young Mr. Travers was afflicted, and who was ready and willing on the smallest provocation to console and comfort him. The young lady's name was Genevieve Crofton, and she always associated herself, in thought, with the heroine of Coleridge's poem, and felt indignant when her relatives referred to her as "Jenny." She was the daughter of the house. Mr. Crofton, an official in a Government establishment, increased his income by "boarding" gentlemen in a superior style. A housekeeper managed the establishment, and Mrs. Crofton kept up the air of always entertaining the boarders as if they were simply visiting at her house. The "consideration" was kept strictly in the background, but the good lady was not, in reality, unmindful of the main chance, and exacted payment for extras even to the uttermost farthing—only she did it through the medium of the housekeeper. Thus adopting the delightful fiction kept up by the Bar of England, whose members cannot so much as mention a fee, but are prompt to send round their clerks to extract the refreshers.

Mr., Mrs., and Miss Crofton would all have been pleased if their youngest boarder had shown a desire to ally himself with their family, but for Jim, just at that period of his existence, the world held one being, and only one. He knew he had altered a good deal, and he thought, without vanity, that he had improved; but still the dead weight of youthfulness was upon him, and he would have given all he possessed if he could have gone down to Hexbury with laurels of some kind upon his brow by way of recommendation. He was far more modest in his opinions of himself than are most of his generation, and, by way of making himself more acceptable, he longed to stand a little higher than upon the dead level of everyday humanity. If he had met Grace now for the first time, after London life had rubbed off some of the rough edges, it would have been more hopeful; but it was bitterness to think how short a time ago he was loafing about Wick Heath with his hands in his pocket, and that indescribable hobbledehoy air which had made Grace learn to look upon him, according to her avowal, as only a boy. Yet, what can a young man do to turn the eyes of the world upon him before his years have numbered one-and-twenty? The days of doughty deeds are over. One may not revert to the golden antique time

“When knights and heroes for a lady’s love
Would spear the dragon.”

Short of being exhibited about the country as a ‘calculating boy’ or in some other phenomenal character Jim could not reasonably have hoped for fame ere this. And even distinction so attained might not have made him any more acceptable to the girl he wished to marry.

“Like Dian’s kiss, unasked, unsought,
Love gives itself, it is not bought.”

Jim realised it, and his heart sank within him. What should he do if Grace sent him about his business? He was not a morbid young man, and under no circumstances would he have been likely to follow the example of Count Ogin sky, of musical memory, who after receiving a slight from his lady-

love, went home and composed *Polonaise*, and then blew his brains out. Jim was far more likely to pack his portmanteau and set forth to see something of the world. In the meantime the misery of suspense was upon him and he counted the days until the appointed month should come, all heedless of the maiden, close at hand, who would have thrown no difficulty in his way and fixed no period of probation.

The other party to the compact for delay was not unmindful that soon she would have to give her answer. She was passing a sombre time down in the country. The winter days were dull, and the winter nights were yet duller; of these latter she now had considerable experience for Dr. Singleton was worse. To use the phrase of the faithful Hicks, his housekeeper, he ' seemed to be breaking ; ' of late days he had not left his room, and sometimes at night he could not be left untended. Then Grace had to watch by the old man's bedside. He was unwilling to consider himself ill enough to require a professional nurse, yet, he admitted, that he was too ill to be left alone. Hicks was quite unequal to the duties of night-watching. She was excellent during the day, but after ten o'clock in the evening she was not to be relied upon for wakefulness. So, to meet the exigencies of the case, Grace turned night into day. Her looks and her nerves suffered as a consequence. Often and often her spirit sank within her as the heavy footsteps of the housekeeper receded down the passage the last thing at night. She busied herself as long as she could, arranging the medicine bottles on the table beside the bed, stirring the fire, and shading her lamp. But the time inevitably came when there was nothing to do but to sit down and watch until the patient should rouse from his fitful slumbers and require medicine or nourishment, according to the doctor's orders. Then she would take a book and try to read, until presently there came one of those mysterious sounds of which night is prolific—a sudden creaking upon the stairs, a rattling against one of the downstairs windows, a rustle or a thud, either within doors or without, for which she longed to account by natural laws, with all the time an under current of dread least they should be connected with the supernatural. One can imagine almost anything at such

times, and when once the dreaded sounds of night had commenced, there was no more reading for Grace ; her gaze travelled into the corners of the shadowy room, or rested upon the sharpened profile of the sleeping patient, in dread expectancy of what was going to happen next. One night, in particular, when the wind came howling round the lonely house, she suffered a terrible fright. Suddenly, in the midst of the roaring and moaning, there was a crash at the back of the house. The girl started to her feet with a wildly palpitating heart, entirely convinced that burglars had then and there effected an entrance to the defenceless premises. When the tardy daylight came and Hicks appeared, Grace felt that this excellent and corpulent woman was dearer and more welcome than all the rest of humankind who happened to be farther off. Hand in hand they went downstairs in the grey and chilly morning, and found—that a shutter had blown down. That was all ; but the discovery of the simple cause to which the sound was to be traced did not set Grace any the more at her ease upon subsequent occasions. It was all very well in the broad light of day to laugh at these unreal terrors, but in the long black night they resumed their vividness. With an irritating persistency the girl's memory went back during these hours of watching to all the gloomy scenes which she had visited. She thought of Hampton Court with its endless chambers, the grim great bedsteads with faded tapestry and hangings—beds whereon the illustrious dead had rested—and wondered how these were looking with the moonlight falling upon them in the silence of the night. She thought of Holyrood which she had seen in her childhood's days, the roofless abbey, and the darksome little chamber where the Queen of Scots had sat when Darnley and his crew broke in and dragged the terror-stricken Rizzio from her presence, to murder him upon the staircase just without. To these and many other scenes of grim character—old castles, dreary towers, and dismal ruins, her thoughts would wander at such times in spite of her efforts to goad them in more cheerful directions. It was only natural that this kind of thing should tell upon her after a time. The medical man who came once a

day, and who was not a very observant person, noticed at length the white cheeks and the dark rims under the girl's eyes, and expressed an opinion that Miss Sumner ought to have a change. But Grace was quite powerless to carry out any such suggestion. To all intents and purposes the advice was as practical as the usual counsel of the consulting physician, who bids persons, with very limited incomes, to drink freely of port wine, and spend the winter on the Continent. If Dr. Singleton had no suggestion to make, she did not see that anyone else could alter the present state of things. And thus the days and nights went by, with a dull and trying uniformity, broken only, in one instance, by the coming of an unexpected visitor.

One morning, as Grace was finishing a late breakfast, after a scanty substitute for a night's rest, a carriage drew up at the gate. The next moment there was a resounding knock at the front door, which startled both Grace and Hicks out of their respective wits. The latter was doing duty upstairs, so upon Grace devolved the undignified office of opening the door. She did so, and on the threshold, with her bonnet strings fluttering in the breeze, stood Mrs. Munns.

The little lady's advent was so sudden and unlooked for, that Grace, in her bewilderment, knew not what was said, nor how they greeted each other. But there was much embracing and kissing on both cheeks, after which Mrs. Munns lapsed into tears, and was escorted weeping to the breakfast room, where she sat by the fire, and after a while began to dry her eyes.

"My dear, it was very cruel of you to leave me in that way," she said at length, returning her handkerchief to its pocket. "I never dreamed of your acting in such a manner. For days afterwards I was unequal to anything, and the Major's anger was dreadful to witness. I never could have believed that you would take offence at what was said, after all that had happened before."

"It was the last straw, I suppose, Aunt," said Grace.

"And," Mrs. Munns went on, "I did expect that you would have written to me, not that the Major would have

allowed me to have the letters, but still I thought that you would have made some effort to arrange the matter amicably, but, as I have often told you, poor Lord Cracklesby used to say, 'young people are so sadly inconsiderate.' "

Grace smiled faintly. It was true that in bygone days she had often heard quoted this truly wise saying of the departed nobleman, and it seemed strange, now, that her aunt should be sitting opposite to her making the same references as of yore. The little lady did not seem one whit altered. Faded she was, but not more faded than in former days; fully as absorbed in herself and her own concerns as she had always been.

"I knew it would be useless to write, and I remembered that it was always troublesome to you to write letters," remarked Grace, in mild justification of her conduct.

"My nerves never allowed me to undertake correspondence," returned her aunt, reverting to the old style of genteel diction.

"Did you stay long at Brighton?" asked Grace.

"We do not stay long anywhere—we never did," replied her aunt, again showing signs of tears. "One night there was a dreadful disturbance with the two young men whom you objected to—"

"Young Markham and Gus Gilbert?" asked Grace.

"Yes, Mr. Markham and Mr. Gilbert; it all happened when I was asleep, but one of the servants came and woke me, though what I could be expected to do I am sure I don't understand. However, it was nearly over then, I believe. The Major insisted upon our going back to London. And it is really dreadful to think of the number of different apartments we have resided in since that time. In my state of health it has been most trying, and with nobody to make the necessary arrangements or to assist me."

Grace only smiled faintly again. She noticed the inference arising from her aunt's concluding sentence, but she felt neither the inclination nor the necessity for taking up the cudgels in self-defence.

"But you must be comfortable now at Blatherwick Park," she said.

"Yes, my dear, it is a delightful establishment, with every luxury, and George is all that is kind when I see him, which is not very often ; but I am afraid there is a disagreement between himself and the Major. I don't know how it is, but nobody seems to be able to agree with the Major after a time. It is exceedingly unfortunate."

"I suppose George is very busy now," Grace asked rather nervously, for the once familiar name openly spoken by herself sounded strange after all this lapse of time.

"Yes, of course he is busy, and it is very desirable that he should get into Parliament. Lord Cracklesby used to say that all young men of means should go into the House of Commons."

Grace sighed slightly. She was unfeignedly glad to see her aunt again, but she felt that she could judge her now more coldly than before, and she recognized in these frequent references to Lord Cracklesby an excuse even for some of the Major's want of temper.

"And how long are you going to stay at the Park ?" she asked.

Mrs. Munns shook her head, as if in feeble protest against the fate which doomed her to be ever a wanderer.

"Not much longer, I am afraid," she said.

"I suppose, too, George will be getting ready for his marriage," Grace asked with an air of great *nonchalance* this time.

Then there came rather a mysterious look into her aunt's face.

"Are—are they very lover-like ?" Grace enquired.

"I have not seen them together ; but I should think not," said Mrs. Munns.

"Why not, Aunt ?"

"I do not think George is very happy, and I did hope once Grace that he was fond of you—that is, of course, it was of no use when he had no money ; but I fancied, perhaps, he might have made things pleasant when you came to live so near to Blatherwick Park."

Grace turned pale.

"I suppose that was the Major's suggestion," she said, almost fiercely.

" My dear Grace," don't speak in that way," protested Mrs. Munns, feebly. " You were always unjust to the Major; I know he has his faults, and he is in fact very trying in various ways; but it was not unnatural that he should associate your coming here with—with something of the kind."

" He did me an injustice," observed Grace, more calmly, " but it is of very little consequence. It so happens that I have never spoken to George since I last spoke to you,"

" I am sure there is no reason why you should not speak to him, or why you should quarrel with all your relations. Perhaps if you had not shut yourself up here he would have wanted to marry you instead of Miss Hawkley, and I am certain you would have suited him much better," said her aunt, with more energy than usual.

Having delivered this volley, Mrs. Munns got up and said that she must go.

" You will come and see me soon at the park, Grace?" she asked.

" Yes, Aunt; perhaps I will," answered her niece, doubtfully; " that is if I can get away; but you know I am a good deal tied here."

" You are a very wicked girl," remarked her Aunt, more than half in earnest.

And Grace stood wondering what constituted her wickedness, as Mrs. Munns was driven away in short-lived splendour, in her nephew's carriage.

CHAPTER XXII.

STRANGERS YET.

A STRANGE feeling of restlessness took possession of Grace after Mrs. Munns had left her. The visit had re-opened old thoughts and old memories which had been slumbering throughout the dull routine of these latter days.

She determined to leave Mrs. Hicks on duty in the invalid's room for a little while longer, whilst she sought a breath of fresh out-of-door air, for the first time for nearly a week. It was not a pleasant day; the air was very cold and the sky was dull and overcast with clouds big with long-threatened snow-storms. She stood at the gate for a moment looking out upon the dreary prospect. To her right the road led straightway towards Hexbury, but a low line of hills hid the city from view, save only the cathedral spire, which was just visible through a break in the downs. On the left the road curved towards the village of Blatherwick, and before her stretched the wide heath, bordered for a long distance on one side by the leafless trees of Blatherwick Park. Right away at the opposite end rose a big hill, or hanger, as the natives called it, from which, as local tradition asserted, one could see into four counties and count a score or so of church steeples. The village was too near; the town was too far; there was nothing for it but to step out across the heath. No living creature was in sight, not even a tethered donkey browsing amongst the furze bushes. Grace felt that the prospect was anything but enlivening, but even as she realised the desolate nature of the surroundings a figure stepped out from a wicket leading from the park—it was a man's figure, and Grace knew it well. The unwonted colour came rushing to her cheeks as she recognized George Martindale. He came from almost the identical spot at which he had made his appearance once before, and now, as then, he turned aside and took his way along by the hedgerow without seeing who was close at hand.

Grace stopped short, and noticed with surprise and pain the dejected air with which her cousin was walking. When she had thought about him in her own dreary hours it had always been as of one flushed with success eagerly taking the good the gods provided for him. Yet here was a man whose look and gait bore the impress of doubt and failure rather than of certainty and success, and Mrs. Munns' words about him came back to her with a force and meaning which they had not conveyed when Grace had heard them only half-an-hour ago.

Had George Martindale come forth from his domain with the air of the conquering hero, or with his old air of self-satisfaction, it is more than likely that Grace, true to the programme she had laid down for herself, would have gladly avoided recognition. Yet now, seeing him as he was, her heart softened, her sympathies quickened, and, acting upon an impulse which prevailed over everything else, she went quickly forward and touched him on the arm.

He turned with a suddenness which slightly disconcerted her, and then raised his hat with an air of constraint and formal courtesy.

"Are you not going to shake hands?" she asked.

"Gladly," he answered, melted a little by her tone; "that is, if one may be guilty of such familiarity with a stranger."

"Why a stranger, George?"

"If you do not know, I am sure I do not."

"You mean my letter, I suppose."

"Yes, I took it as a sentence of banishment from your presence."

"I thought it would be better so," she said, quite humbly. "I did not want people to put a wrong construction upon my coming here, and, besides, we move in different spheres, but—"

"But what?"

"The banishment was not to last for ever. When you are married I do not know that there will be anything to prevent our meeting, that is, if your wife will let me come to the park, and if—." Again she hesitated.

"And if what?" he asked.

"Oh, there are various contingencies," she said, with the colour still mantling in her cheeks.

He stood looking at her in silence for a moment, then broke out suddenly :

"Grace, I wish to heaven you had not kept up this barrier between us all this time. What have we gained by it?"

"What have we lost by it?"

"Perhaps a great deal—more than we shall ever know," he answered, gloomily.

" You do not seem very happy," she said, slowly.

" I am not. I am one of the most miserable men upon this earth."

She was startled by his vehemence, and he, perhaps, was a little ashamed of it. To dispel the feeling of awkwardness they, as by consent, moved onwards, side by side. Grace was the first to break the silence.

" This ought not to be, George," she said, speaking low and gently; " I thought everything was going well with you."

He made no answer, and she went on :

" Perhaps I *have* been wrong in holding aloof from you—wrong in many ways. You remember how we used to take counsel together in the old days. Can I help you now?"

" I do not think you can," he said wearily. " A man ought to be able to help himself, and yet—" He hesitated and looked into her face, doubting, perhaps, whether it might not be better after all to tell her everything, and take the counsel which she offered him. But if this was what passed through his mind, his courage failed him. He dreaded to appear less worthy in her eyes than he already was; whilst willing to divide his load, he feared to show what manner of burden he was carrying. Yet her frankness and gentleness of manner touched him. Now that the first surprise of their meeting had worn off, it soothed him to be in her presence once again, and presently they were talking with each other without constraint. At first Grace felt in honour bound to tell him of the scene to which she had been an involuntary witness in his own grounds, but she gave up the idea. It was a disagreeable thing to mention, and present circumstances were not propitious.

" Tell me about Miss Hawkley," she said after a while. " What are her tastes? What does she like?" He shrugged his shoulders for answer. " Does she paint, does she sing, does she play?"

" Yes, she sings and plays after a fashion."

She looked at him with surprise.

" George, what can you be thinking about. You are to have a beautiful wife—for she is beautiful; you are a rich man,

and you are to be a Member of Parliament, and yet you don't seem contented."

"Is it not astonishing?" he asked, ironically.

"What does it all mean?" she asked again. "Or," noticing the haggard look upon his face, "is there something which I know nothing about, some secret?"

"I cannot tell you," he answered almost fiercely. "Do not ask me anything about it." Then he abruptly changed the subject.

"Why should all our talk be about myself. I am less fond of the topic than I used to be. What is this I hear whispered about you, Grace, and that fellow, Hawkley's nephew?"

He looked at her keenly, almost jealously, though Heaven only knows by what right he did so, and Grace for her part turned her head aside, and tried to think what she could say. "You do not answer," he exclaimed. "Then there is really some truth in it."

"Why should there not be," she asked, almost defiantly; "and I should like to know who is your informant."

"I heard of it at the Cedars. They guessed what was going on, I suppose."

"It was gracious of them to take any interest in my affairs. Should I be welcomed into the family, George?"

She spoke in half mocking tones now.

"You are not talking seriously," he said.

"But I should like to know the views of the Hawkley family, at any rate. They might enable me to—to shape my course, might they not. Confess, now, George, that they look upon me as one of your poor relations. What have you told Miss Hawkley about me?"

"She knows that you are my cousin."

"She has not condescended to call upon me."

"I told her that I believed you did not wish to be called upon; besides—"

"She does not like poor relations!"

He made a gesture of impatience.

"George, you are not polite. But we will not quarrel, and yet it would not be natural if we agreed. It is strange that

we should have met thus, or rather that we have not met before. What am I saying? Even now we do not seem to have told each other much, although there ought to be much to tell. Perhaps it is of little use to talk about the past. We are right to keep our secrets, and there is nothing to be gained by showing one's friends over the storehouse of one's memory. The future—that is what we should think about. The times seem out of joint now, but the future will surely bring great things for you, at all events."

She had spoken latterly with something like excitement, but now she lowered her tones almost to a whisper. "George, let us wish each other happiness, the best sort of happiness, and try to deserve it."

He took the hand which was near to him, and she let it rest within his for a brief moment.

"Grace, I believe you are the most unselfish woman I know."

"Then your acquaintance is very limited, for, depend upon it, I am neither better, and, I hope, not much worse, than other people."

"I do not agree with you. But if you thought yourself unselfish, I suppose that would spoil the possession of the gift. You deserve a better fate than to spend your life hidden away in the country nursing a querulous old man."

"Do not say that," she answered. "I am thankful to do something. It is better to be useful in a little way than not at all, besides, it will not last for ever."

"You mean that you will marry this fellow Travers?"

"I do not mean that—necessarily."

"But probably?"

"Nor, probably."

"Possibly then?"

"Yes, possibly; all things are possible."

He swung on at a quicker pace in silence. For the moment he forgot the tangled skein which was closing round him, in a feeling of keen resentment against "that fellow Travers," who had dared to step into the shoes which he had tossed aside. He knew well enough that he, of all men, had no right to complain, and yet, in his inmost spirit, he did

complain most bitterly. It was an exemplification of the sublime selfishness of mortals.

In his pre-occupation he did not notice that the snow was beginning to fall; stray flakes came floating down, fore-runners of the gathering storm. The girl's voice recalled him.

"I must turn back," she said; "the storm is coming, and it is getting colder and colder."

Nothing else was said until they were again abreast of the wicket leading into the park. Then Grace stopped and held out her hand.

"Good-bye, George. We may not meet again for a long time. 'It may be for years, and it may be for ever,' as the song says."

He looked at her without answering for a moment, as if doubting whether to hide or not to hide the thoughts that were filling his mind. Then he took her hand, and held it.

"I do not know why it should be good-bye either for years or for ever," he said. "Now we have broken the ice, may I not come and see you, if—if I have anything to say—if I want to take counsel about anything?"

"I do not know," she replied, hesitatingly; "perhaps it will be better not, *now*?"

"Why not now?"

"It might offend Miss Hawkley; she would not understand a sudden renewal of—friendship between us."

"Never mind Miss Hawkley," he answered; "I am a free agent at present, at any rate."

"But is not she the right person to be your *confidante*?"

"We need not discuss that, I think; but I accept the discouragement you think it advisable to offer me," he said coldly.

"What do you mean," Grace asked.

"I was reading some poetry the other day, about a man whose better angel passed unseen. Perhaps I mean that."

"George, you are talking nonsense," she said hurriedly.

"Utter nonsense! Grace. I know it."

"Good-bye," she said again, and drew her hand from his. He stood looking after her slight figure, as she hurried

homewards, amid the snow flakes, now falling thick and fast—thicker and faster! until presently they hid her from his sight.

For himself he took little heed of the weather in his present mood. He turned in at the wicket, walking slowly and with eyes bent upon the ground. When he had advanced beneath the trees, he drew from his pocket and read—not for the first time—a very short epistle.

“DEAR MARTINDALE,—It is not worth while to have another interview, as we understand each other. Don’t trouble yourself further. Two thousand will satisfy me. I sleep at Hexbury to-night, but will be back at the Park to-morrow evening.

“Yours,

“BAYFORD MUNNS.”

He was folding the note again, when the sound of a twig breaking made him look sharply round. It was only one of his own people—Ned Gill, in fact, who had just turned out of a pathway, with his gun upon his shoulder.

He touched his hat.

“Looks as if we’re going to be snowed up, soir.”

His master nodded his head without answering, and went his way at a quicker pace. Perhaps, if he had given utterance to his thoughts at that moment, after a re-perusal of the Major’s letter, it might have been in some sort of a paraphrase of an exclamation with which our English Histories have made us familiar: “Who will rid me of this turbulent priest?” As upon that memorable occasion, there were those at hand who were ready to catch up their Monarch’s words, and act upon them; so, now, perhaps, had Martindale really spoken, he would have found a retainer ready to carry out his implied behest in a form duly modified to suit the circumstances.

Gill stood, watching his employer’s receding form with a curious mixture of hesitation and cunning expressed upon his not very noble features. Perhaps, after all, he needed no sudden exclamation to put him in the track which he thought would lead to favour and fortune, and yet few things could have astonished Martindale more than to have been

told, that his lodge-keeper knew, or suspected, the key to his present frame of mind. It might have been otherwise if he had known of the third person who had "assisted" at his interview with Major Munns in the avenue.

CHAPTER XXIII.

ACROSS THE HEATH.

AT intervals the snow continued to fall throughout that day, and throughout the night that followed it, and the day that followed the night. Then, towards evening, it ceased and hill and dale, town and country, lay muffled in one great coverlet of white. The good people of Hexbury had not experienced such a storm for many a year. They closed their shops, and drew down their blinds early that evening, and by-and-by the moon rose in the clear cold sky, and shone down upon Cathedral spire and solemn cloisters, Assize Court, steep High Street, and shadowy by-ways; all silent as in a city of the dead, all mystic, wonderful—from an external point of view. But within the homes of Hexbury things were going on much the same as usual. The tradesman was in his counting-house counting out his money. The tradesman's wife was mending the children's garments, and the children themselves were partaking of their suppers.

There was a panorama at the Assembly Rooms from eight till ten, an entertainment combining amusement with instruction, but, as the inevitable paragraph in the local papers afterwards said, owing to the very unpropitious state of the weather, the audience was thin. It was very thin. So thin that the grandiloquent man who stood on the stage and pointed with the long stick to places of interest on the moving canvas hurried through his lesson and grew irritable when some boys in the gallery imitated his tones. So thin, that the poor young woman who sat at the hired grand piano rattled out the "appropriate airs" without being very scrupulous as to time or tune. At ten o'clock to the moment

the entertainment was concluded, and the hall-keeper turned out the gas and banged the doors almost before the people had time to make their way out. For a brief while there was the sound of voices in the street, but everybody hurried home ; there was, perhaps, a shout here and there as a few of the irrepressible boys who had sat in the gallery chased each other with snow-balls. Then silence again, save when a burst of extra merriment came forth from one of the public-houses. Now and then, too, there was the click-click of billiard balls for the sons of the citizens handled the cue and found the atmosphere of the billiard room, albeit smoky and gaseous, more congenial to their tastes than the family fireside and punctual prayers. But ere long the balls were allowed to lie still in the pockets and the exigencies of the licensing law necessitated the closing of the public-houses. The customers of the licensed victualler came forth with jokes, of which noise was the principal ingredient, and bad language the indispensable accompaniment. For a little time the peaceful air was tortured with boisterous protestations about not going home till morning, until the half-drunken singer changed his mind, or, awed by the chaste white night, staggered in sudden silence towards his dwelling.

Most of the lights were out now, and the good people were burying their cold noses beneath the bed-clothes, the advice of the late Canon Kingsley notwithstanding. There was one establishment, however, in which the gas was still burning freely, an establishment, which under the character of a club, enjoyed an immunity from police supervision, and the operation of the licensing laws at which the non-privileged beer retailer is wont to exclaim in the language of injured innocence garnished with oaths. It was the same club at which Colonel Hawkley had invited Major Munns to lunch with him, and to follow that refreshment with a quiet game of *ecarté*. It was a club, mainly supported, indeed, by the officers of the small garrison, and by a few young country squires and others, as a place in which games of skill, and chance, might be indulged in without any restrictions, save those imposed by remarkably elastic rules.

The street doors stood wide open still, although the hour

was late, and in a recess in the entrance hall sat a yawning man, the hall porter, whose duty it was to mount sentry here in readiness to carry notes and messages, go for cabs and make himself useful, until the last member had left the club for the night.

This porter was a man who had sailed the Spanish main and many another. He loved a yarn, and it irked him so much to sit here companionless that he would have given up the situation, but for the circumstance of his having a large family and only one arm in these latter days, wherewith to support them.

He was beginning to doze gently in his chair, and the cold was stealing over his limbs when a familiar voice aroused him.

"Hullo! there," said the voice.

The quondam seaman rubbed his eyes and looking out, perceived a square-shouldered muffled figure standing by the doorstep in the snow.

"Ahoy, mate," he replied in an undertone, so as not to disturb the steward who was in a room close by.

"How are you getting on," asked the man who stood without.

"Pretty tidy. How's yourself?" responded the porter. Then he got up, and came forward to where his friend and relative, Ned Gill, was standing.

"What are you a-doing in town, this time of night," he inquired.

Gill winked and implied that he had taken French leave.

"Keep it dark," he said with a nod.

"Right you are," said the porter.

Then they fell into friendly converse about family matters and mutual acquaintances, and presently upon the porter's invitation Gill came stealthily in and stood by the big fire which was still burning.

"What's going on upstairs?" he asked with a careless air.

"Card-playing to be sure," was the reply.

"Always at it, ain't they?"

"Pretty nigh," said the porter.

"Wins and loses lots of money too, I s'pose?"

"Shouldn't wonder," was the answer.

"Anyone as I know, up there?"

"That there little major—you'll be able to see him home."

"Catch me," said Gill, "I ain't going out of my road for the likes of him."

"You ain't going back to your place to-night, then?"

"P'raps not. How does he get on at the cards now?"

"Well, if so be, I go up there he is generally pulling off I should say," responded his friend.

"Been up to-night, have you," asked Gill.

The porter nodded.

"And what sort of luck was he having?"

"Pretty tidy I should say, but bless you I don't know much about it, and don't want to," said the porter who was weary.

Gill did not stay much longer. He went out into the street, lit his pipe, and was lost to view. And yet he did not go very far. At another time his friend might have noticed that his footsteps were not audible very long, but to-night they could not be heard at all. The snow deadened the sound from the moment he stepped from the club steps to the pavement.

He went a dozen yards down the street, then crossed the road and took up a position in the shadow of an archway leading towards the cathedral grounds. From this place he could keep the club entrance still in view.

Twelve o'clock chimed out from the city churches. Then solemn stillness reigned again. A quarter past twelve—half-past—a quarter to one. Then there was a movement apparent in the card-room of the club. Shadows passed across the window blinds, and in a few minutes there was a sound of voices on the staircase. Gill moved forward a little from his lurking place. He caught a glimpse of Major Munns coming towards the doorstep, with a jaunty air; his hat slightly on one side, and his gait not very steady.

"Devilish cold," he heard him exclaim. "Any cabs to be had?"

The porter informed him that such a thing could not be obtained, except by rousing the people at the "George."

Then, after some further discussion, the purport of which the listener could not gather, the Major came out into the street, turning up the collar of his overcoat.

It was evident that he had given up the idea of getting a cab, and that he was about to walk to Blatherwick Park. Under other circumstances, finding what the hour was, he would probably have returned to his inn until the following morning. As it was, however, there were particular reasons for his return without further delay. The Major therefore lit a cigar, and started at a quick pace up the street.

When he had gone about fifty yards, the man who was watching him from the shadow slipped out and followed; but there was a difference in his appearance now: whereas he had gone under the archway clad in a rough frieze coat, he came forth from it in a labouring man's smock frock, white as the snow upon which he trod so softly.

The Major seemed cheerful. Now and again he took his cigar from between his lips, and hummed a snatch of a song. When he reached the bridge he paused for a moment, and looked over the parapet at the swift river hurrying between the buttresses. Only for a moment, then on again at a quicker pace, stamping his feet in the snow. The road towards Blatherwick wound out from the town between two hills, upon the sides of which some of the wealthier towns-people had built themselves villa residences, detached and semi-detached. Other houses, in terraces and crescents, had been half built by a speculative builder, whose fortunes had collapsed before he could carry out his plans. These, looking grim and ghastly, with tall scaffolding poles round them, and the moonlight shining through the gaps where the doors and windows should have been, were quite on the outskirts of the town. A little farther on, and the last of the street lamps was passed; the road took a turn; on either side was a tall hedge; a little farther yet and a turnpike gate was reached; another half-mile, and all signs of habitation were left behind. The Major found himself on the borders of Wick Heath.

Still and beautiful it lay in the starshine, with the snow sparkling back to the sky. Wide and far-stretching as it was, the imagination might have held it to be a far greater expanse, for all outlines were lost in the mysterious light of moon and stars. To-night it had the solitude and grandeur of a prairie, rather than the mere quietude of an English common at night-time.

It was a night for noble thoughts ; a night when the spirit might wander forth into the dreamy, magical air, in hope of divining some grander problem than those to which one is compelled to give the first consideration in the bustling day-time. But noble thoughts were not the thoughts of Major Munns. The problem which presented itself to his mind was as to the length of time it would take him to cross this dreary heath. He blamed himself for having wanted to play that last game of whist, although it had resulted satisfactorily ; he ought to have remembered that he was not in never-sleeping London, and that in the dull old town of Hexbury, even cab-drivers went to bed at reasonable hours.

The last flicker of his gaiety died out as he looked over the silent scene before him. The pleasant glow obtained through the medium of brandy-and-water was gradually departing. The cold began to tell upon his fingers and his feet, and for the first time it occurred to him that there might be some difficulty in rousing the servants and gaining admittance to the house. He felt half inclined for a moment to turn back to Hexbury ; but having come thus far there would be little gain from changing his plans. To hesitate was to get colder, so he went on, but humming no more. The snow lay thicker on the heath than in the town, and it was tiresome walking ; moreover he presently found that he had blundered away from the road and was taking a wrong direction.

He stopped and gazed about him, growling at his fate or his stupidity. He was a short-sighted man, but on looking back upon the way that he had come it struck him that he saw an object which he did not remember to have passed. It was something white as to the greater part of it. Not a milestone, for there were none upon the road which stood

so high ; not an animal, for its shape precluded such a supposition ; moreover, no man could be so brutal as to leave his ox or his ass unsheltered upon such a night. What then was it ? Not a man, surely ; for why should a man assume the motionless character of a sign post ? And yet the Major was in doubt. Certainly the object which had attracted his attention resembled more the human species than anything else which he could think of.

He turned his back upon it whatever it might be, and went onward again, taking an angle which he presumed to be the proper one to lead him to his destination. Yet when he had gone a dozen paces or so, he felt an irresistible inclination to look back again. He did so, and a queer, uncomfortable feeling stole over him, for the object which he had noticed was in the act of moving, but when he stopped it stopped also.

He strained his eyes this time, endeavouring to clear up the mystery. He could see enough now to satisfy him that the form was that of a man, and that he was closer at hand than when he had at first observed him.

One thing thereupon occurred to the Major as highly desirable, namely, that the distance between himself and this man in white should not be lessened. He waited no longer, but turned, and again went forward as quickly as his legs could carry him, short of breaking into an actual run.

He covered a good fifty yards in this way before yielding to an overpowering anxiety to take further observations. But this time he glanced back without exactly coming to a standstill, and a yet more uneasy feeling took possession of him as he saw that the figure was swiftly and noiselessly following in his track. There was no gainsaying it. It was not a delusion ; not some fancy conjured up by the place and circumstances and the lonely hour. It was an absolute certainty that this mysterious figure was following him, and the only question was—with what object ?

“ Hullo there ! Who the deuce are you ? ”

This was an almost involuntary enquiry on the part of Major Munns, but it was uttered with all the threatening gruffness which he was able to command. The words

echoed away over the still space in such a way that the speaker scarcely recognised them as of his own utterance. Moreover, they were fruitless. No answer came from the figure, which, now that the Major halted, was again as motionless as before.

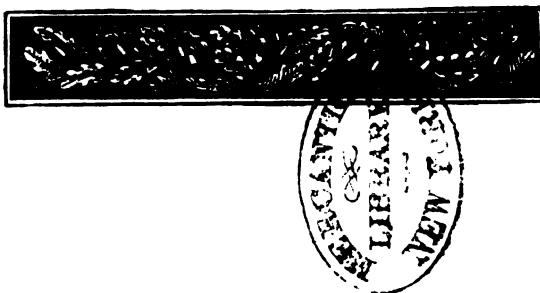
Then the Major, between doubt and fright, waxed ferocious.

"You infernal scoundrel," he cried. "Why don't you speak?"

Even this produced no result, and the Major's heart was faint within him. To stand there gazing and putting questions which brought no replies was impossible. Equally impossible did it seem to turn his back upon this figure, which, from its very silence, exercised a sort of fascination upon him, and gave to the disagreeable reality a flavour of the supernatural. Yet of the two evils to speed onward was the better choice. He tried to persuade himself that it was some idle trick, some vile practical joke, got up, perhaps, by the men with whom he had been playing at the club. But whilst he was thus debating with himself, action suddenly became imperative, for with a sudden dart the figure came towards him, and with a sort of gasp, the Major turned and fled.

Panting, stumbling, he tore onwards through the snow. But his pursuer was the swifter man. He was close upon him, and the pursued, not daring to turn, gave vent to an inarticulate cry which died away almost as suddenly as the labouring breath gave it forth. Then there was a grip upon his shoulder, and half turning now in desperation, he met the spring of his assailant. Carried backwards by the impetus of his speed, the Major was borne down in an instant. He felt a blow upon his temple which made a thousand sparks fly out before him. Then mist and darkness seemed to swallow him up. He was half conscious that a rough hand tore his coat aside and dragged forth his leathern pocket-book. That was all. There followed a blank, at the end of which he found himself alone, his uncovered head half buried in the snow, his face looking upwards to the calm canopy of night.

To be continued.)



SCIENTIFIC RELIGION: An Old Question.

“In the centre of the world-whirlwind, verily now, as in the
oldest days, dwells and speaks a God.”

CARLYLE.

“Our little systems have their day;
They have their day, and cease to be :
They are but broken lights of thee,
And thou, O Lord, art more than they.”

IN MEMORIAM.

IN the *Fortnightly Review* for June, Mr. George Henry Lewes pours out his sorrow at the perversity of many of his fellow men; in that they foolishly rail at and even express a dread of science as science, although their daily life, with its struggles and sorrows, is continually aided and relieved by the many successful results of scientific research. “There are men of culture,” says Mr. Lewes, “who take pride in expressing their indifference to science.” They are too fond of saying, with the morbid hero of *Maud*, that the man of science is “fonder of glory, and vain,” and even go on to declare that, though his eye is “well-practised in nature” yet his spirit is “bounded and poor.” The scientific man refrains from continuing the quotation (which might snub an ordinary man of culture)—“the passionate heart of the poet is whirl’d into folly and vice”—not so much because he thinks it untrue, but simply because it is insufficient to express all his contempt for the benighted devotee of culture, and culture alone. However,

it may at once be granted that a man who says he despises science is a very foolish man. Nor, of course, would Mr. Lewes have a very high opinion of a scientific prig, who declared that the time spent in studying literature was time wasted. Neither the one nor the other is to be despised. But is there any real antagonism? Let us follow Mr. Lewes through some of his arguments. He first endeavours to prove his assertion—that there does exist a dread and a dislike of science; and then he proceeds to give what he considers to be the causes.

Mr. Lewes grants at once that science was never so popular as at present. But he complains that there are still persons who harbour unreasonable prejudices against it, based on misconceptions, which are the causes of a strong dislike. The anti-vivisectionists are some of these prejudiced persons—such at least as object to vivisection, *because* the experiments are made for scientific purposes alone. Those who sympathize with animal suffering, and endeavour to repress all unnecessary infliction of it are fully respected by Mr. Lewes; but too often the men who object to vivisection on these grounds are (perhaps thoughtlessly) tolerant of an enormous amount of torture yearly inflicted on animals, either to please their palate, or gratify their desire for sport. Mr. Lewes of course puts his point forcibly; and, we must say, we think he has the best of the argument. We ought not to charge scientific men with the "selfish motive of acquiring reputations;" though in some few cases (and those are, for the most part, foreign ones) the charge may not have been quite undeserved. Wars, and other evils, are tolerated without complaint, if the motive be commercial advantage; all these things are so because science is not recognised as a social benefit. Having thus shown the existence of this dislike, Mr. Lewes proceeds to give the reason for it. The first cause, he says, is a misconception of what science is. "Science is simply knowledge classified, systematised, made orderly, impersonal, and exact; instead of being left unclassified, fragmentary, personal and inexact." It has been called "Common Sense methodised and extended." Since no one would hesitate to place knowledge

above ignorance as a guide in life and conduct, Mr. Lewes supposes that science thus correctly conceived will excite no dislike and cause no dread. But even when it is admitted that science is this systematised common sense it still arouses in some a dislike ; for it is systematisation itself that gives so many of us annoyance. We are indolent, and exactness is troublesome. To jump at conclusions by guessing is much more easy (and, we fear, much more natural !) than arriving at them by patient observation. As knowledge advances we shall readily admit that accuracy is not to be cried down merely because it is less trouble to be inaccurate and vague in our assertions ; and we shall at once see that there is no right of private judgment, without evidence to guide us.

Now comes an important sentence. When this advance has been made “there will disappear *certain mistaken pretensions of scientific men too ready to step beyond their own domain.*” “This it is,” continues Mr. Lewes, “which causes the distaste of artists, men of letters, and moralists ; and their opposition to the spread of scientific teaching.” This opposition, Mr. Lewes acknowledges to be rational. It is an offence against scientific method. For science is taken as meaning first “a general method, or logic of search, applicable to all departments of knowledge ; and secondly, a doctrine, or body of truths and hypotheses, embracing the results of search.” Having seen what objection to the spread of scientific teaching is rational, we will see what objection is irrational.

“It is irrational when protesting against the rigorous application of one logic to all enquiries.” He adds : “Those, therefore, who sneer at science, and would obstruct its diffusion, are sneering at the effort to make all knowledge systematic, and are obstructing the advance of civilisation.” And here we come to the well-worn arguments on the conflict between science and theology. To attempt to apply the same logic to theology and to our faith which is applied to other matters would apparently *reason away* our religion. But faith cannot be so argued about. Our religion is *rational* in all practical matters—the promotion of goodness, the enjoining of grace and peace. But when we come to give

our reasons for our belief in a Personal God, and in a future life, we may confess that they are not satisfactory as strict *proofs*. We cannot *prove* the existence of a God : we believe that there is one ; we believe it intuitively (unsatisfactory reason for the sceptic perhaps !), and so believing, we pass on to have a solemn hope of a life beyond the grave. On the other hand no logical arguments can *prove* that a Personal God does not exist, or even if to his own satisfaction a man could logically prove this non-existence, we should still cling to our belief ; no logic can do away with God if there be one, and no logic could really shake our earnest trust in Him. Where proofs and reasons begin, there faith ends of necessity, for this belief of ours is no conviction based on logic ; it is with us an instinct. It is a question too wide and too deep for us fairly to enter upon here. That men can accept and have accepted the general truths of science, and yet have remained firm in their religious beliefs, cannot be denied. Nor does Mr. Lewes wish to conceal this from himself. "We have," he says, "too many conspicuous examples of men eminent in science, and sincere in their theological professions, not to admit that the mind *can* follow two logics, and *can* accept both the natural and the supernatural explanations." Charles Kingsley might be brought forward as an example, and (to a great extent) Mr. W. R. Greg also. It is practically useless to argue about such points as these. It is the very essence of faith—that blind following, that childlike obedience, without the exercise of our reason. The philosopher may smile or sigh in pity at our dark superstition, but that faith remains unshaken. Goethe declared that the human race can never attain to anything higher than Christianity—that is, the religion given us in the teaching and in the life of Christ. "What better test of truth have we than the ablest men's acceptance of it ?" asks Mr. Froude ; and yet this "mere absurdity" (as it has been called) has spread through the whole civilised world, accepted in ages of great mental activity by the strongest minds. Nervous people, then, "dread" science, which they fear will rob them of their God ; persons blest with a strong faith are indifferent to science and its *dicta*

about their God ; or, if they fear at all, their fear is for "the weaker brethren," and not for themselves.

" In the struggle of life with the facts of existence science is a bringer of aid ; in the struggle of the soul with the mystery of existence science is a bringer of light." All will agree with the first part ; can we expect those to whom God is a reality—a friend and guide—to accept this last assertion, that science is a bringer of *light* ? If they could be convinced that there was no God, that their beliefs were folly, and their prayers emptiness, would that be to them *light* ? It would be the light which just serves to show how great the darkness is. But if on this point—the existence of a God—science and religion seem to be antagonistic, it need be but a passive antagonism. If it be agreed that we cannot, according to our laws of logic, prove the existence of a Personal God, and that by applying those same laws no definitely negative result can be obtained, we may at least leave the discussion and consider it a drawn battle. In practical matters there is no conflict between science and Christianity. The principles of forbearance, and of kindness; of *charity*, in short, in its widest sense, are honoured and valued by scientific men, who may, at the same time, reject and despise our system of theology. In fact, to repeat what Mr. Lewes says : " In the struggle of life with the facts of existence, science is a bringer of aid." In searching after moral excellence, in striving for that true culture which chiefly consists in " self-reverence, self-knowledge, self-control," science is not against us. Scientific men desire these things, and prize them when gained, as much as we do ; though their desire for them may be based on grounds widely differing from ours.

We have seen, therefore, that the dread and dislike of science or knowledge, merely because it *is* science, is utterly irrational ; and, we believe, is nearly extinct. The dislike which literary men express towards it has been acknowledged in most cases to be rational ; seeing that it is not a dislike of *science*, but of certain students of special branches who are too often ready to misapply their knowledge, and give judgment on points beyond their reach. We have

seen, too, that in practical matters science and religion go hand in hand, while between science and *Theism* the dislike, if dislike there be, or rather the antagonism which exists, is really a passive antagonism, because the very nature of the conflict prevents either side from claiming a complete—or even nearly complete—logical victory. For us Christians the words of the introduction to *In Memoriam* are profoundly true :

“ We have but faith : we cannot know ;
For knowledge is of things we see ;
And yet we trust it comes from Thee,
A beam in darkness let it grow.”

For all serious and thoughtful minds, Christian or non-Christian, these lines will be full of comfort, full of suggestion. Let us, then, leave a much-vexed question with those for our last words.

P. ANDERSON-MORSHEAD.





FAITHFUL OR FAITHLESS ?

By R. A. LEA.

CHAPTER I.

"A GOVERNESS."



GOVERNESS!" aunt exclaimed ; "Nonsense, Janet! I cannot allow it. What will the world say?"

I was silent.

Aunt continued, crescendo : "Ridiculous! Preposterous! After all my kindness, too; you really are ungrateful. Don't interrupt me. I will not give my consent. Of course, you can do without it. Oh! to think a niece of mine should earn a beggarly livelihood teaching at sixpence an hour."

"I don't intend to fall quite so low. Mrs. Trevor hopes to get me a place with the Freijherrin von Falkenstein."

"*Get a place,*" aunt indignantly repeated ; "you talk like a servant. Have you no proper pride? And pray what may a free herring, or whatever you call it, be?"

"A baroness, living in Holland."

"In Holland; oh!" this in a slightly modified tone. "Oh, well, you can say you are going on the Continent to stay with your friend the Baroness of Freyherring; it will save a world of unnecessary gossip." I shook my head.

"Do, dear, for my sake. Think how every one will say I've turned my brother's child out of house and home. No, it's too bad of you, Janet; you always were selfish. Think of poor Violet's prospects."

"Aunt, you are unjust," I exclaimed. On Violet's account I was leaving, but her mother did not know this.

"Whatever will Lady Frances say?" she mournfully continued.

"You may rely upon my putting things in the right light," I said; "she will look upon it as one of my eccentricities—a whim—a *caprice de jeune fille*."

Aunt liked a French quotation, although she rarely understood it.

"And Violet, does she know of your caprice?"

"No, I have not told her; I will do so now."

My aunt sighed, crossed her hands, contemplating the pretty finger tips as they peeped from the old gloves cut into mittens, and resignedly said, "You are so like poor dear Robert!" Robert was my father.

"I am firm," I quickly replied.

"Obstinate, dear," Aunt Anna remorselessly observed, adding: "give me the third volume of 'Broken Hearts,' and a footstool, and go your way."

All of which I did, leaving aunt in what she was pleased to call the boudoir. I went in search of Violet. The drawing-room was empty. I was going when I heard a low sigh in the conservatory, and saw my cousin, her hands lying listlessly on her work, a wistful look in her large grey eyes. Hearing a step, she started, coloured, and hastily caught up her work.

I told her I was going away, and with a keen pang I noted the bright look in her face, but it passed quickly.

"Going away, Janet; why do you wish to leave us? What shall we do without you? Where—where are you going? What do you mean?"

"I mean to be a governess."

"A governess!" echoed Violet.

"There is nothing to keep me here," I tried to speak cheerfully; "and I want to make my fortune. By going abroad I may get seventy pounds a-year, and that, with my own income, will make me quite a millionaire, and enable me to marry a poor man should I ever feel so disposed!"

"A governess! oh! I can't bear it."

Here she fairly broke down and burst into tears. This upset me, and we sobbed together. After a while I abruptly said, "What a fool I am; I am not going just yet; I am going to the Hall. Will you come, dear?"

Violet took my hands in hers, looked solemnly in my face, dropped them and herself into a chair, and said, decidedly: "No, dear, I shall *not* go to the Hall; I must finish mother's lace cap."

CHAPTER II.

LOOKING BACK.

MRS. MAY (my Aunt Anna) had two objects in life—one to seem richer and more aristocratic than she was; the other, to secure Frank Conway's hand and fortune for her daughter. Frank was the only son of Mr. and Lady Frances Conway, a great favourite, and the great *parti* of the neighbourhood. My uncle, dying suddenly, left aunt a young and pretty widow, with small means and four young children.

She had brought them up creditably. The youngest son was with my only brother Allan, in Australia; the two elder, partners in a prosperous firm in the city, were both married—Tom to a rich brewer's daughter; Alfred, the handsome one, to Matilda, youngest child of Sir Henry Stewart, Knight, one of the justices of Her Majesty's Court of Common Pleas. The family never treated Aunt civilly; we were therefore not on terms with them—Matilda herself, by her foolish behaviour, widening the breach. Violet and I often laughed merrily at her aristocratic airs, and indulged in a smile at *la noblesse de robe*. She was jealous of Violet's exceeding beauty and stately appearance. Matilda was tall, but ungraceful and angular; her hair, a dull sandy colour, which no pomatum could darken into the rich red, she was pleased to call Violet's golden hair. Her complexion, faded and pale, was bright with borrowed lustre and *bloom de Ninon*.

Both my married cousins lived at Mertoun, near us, too near for us women folk to get on well together.

It certainly was hard upon Aunt Anna to have an extra burthen imposed upon her, and although I paid a small sum towards the household expenses, I could not afford much from my modest income of a hundred a year; as it was I had very little left for dress and extras. Dress was a subject upon which aunt and I differed, she objected to my merino gown and quiet "friendly colours," and liked decided tints. She followed the maxim which holds a hole, an accident; a darn, premeditated poverty; a silk gown in rags, a torn lace collar, were far more ladylike than a print gown fit only for a house-maid.

Aunt Anna was amiable but trying, and had it not been for my cousin Violet, I could not have borne with her. Violet I loved intensely, and my greatest wish was to see her happy. I was leaving from a perhaps fanciful idea, that Vy's supposed lover, Mr Conway, was trying to make me fond of him. Knowing I had a strong dash of coquetry and a craving for admiration, I resolved to put it out of my power to gratify and indulge my vanity. I could not feel angry with Frank Conway, and when he dined at the villa, or joined us at lawn tennis, I could not refrain from wearing my prettiest costume, or arranging my hair as he liked it, and making myself agreeable. I deplored my base conduct, vowed I would never do so again, until the next time I had a chance, when I sinned as badly as ever. I was walking across the Common to the Hall thinking these bitter thoughts, when, under a large elm tree, I saw the object of my meditation, Frank Conway.

I blushed, and angry with myself, blushed more vividly. He looked delighted.

"Whither away, Miss Janet," he asked, doffing his hat, and giving my hand a tender squeeze.

"To the Hall; is Lady Frances at home?" I curtly replied.

"Yes, and charmed to see you. How lucky we met. I was on my way to the Villa—look."

He shewed me a card.

"Aunt and Violet will be delighted to see you. Good-bye."

Mr. Conway dived again into his pocket and produced another card.

"This is for you. Do you remember saying you had never seen a fancy ball?"

"Oh! how delightful! When is it for?"

"The 20th. You will come, won't you?"

"With pleasure," I politely answered; "and now once more good-bye."

"May I not walk back with you," he pleaded, retaining my hand in his grasp.

"Indeed, no!" I replied, firmly.

"Cruel!—but stay—do tell me what costume you will wear and I'll make the match."

Affecting not to hear the last words, I asked him to suggest a becoming one.

With a warm glance of admiration, he decided a classical dress would suit my style.

I laughed: "you are joking—I shall choose some peasant's of low degree."

"I'll be the Lord of Burleigh."

Seeing I looked annoyed, he added—

"What do you say to Semiramis, or Cleopatra, or Norma—grand and severe."

"I am neither one nor the other; pray whom does your Highness intend to be? Sir Charles Grandison?" This I said, knowing he objected to the flippancy of the modern *jeunesse dorée*.

"Certainly, if you will be Harriet Byron."

I looked vexed, and he hastily continued—

"If I tell you, no one else must know."

"Honour bright," I answered.

"Bluebeard." This in a stage aside.

"Good-bye."

He whispered mysteriously, "Faust."

"Lovely," I exclaimed, secretly resolving who should be Marguerite. "I have said good-bye so often, so now *sans adieu*."

"May I go with you?"

"No, I really am too busy—after seeing your mother I have shopping and poor people, and—"

"You will not have me." He looked wounded, raised his hat, and I went on my way.

CHAPTER III.

LOOKING FORWARD.

ON my return I found Aunt and Violet in great excitement; Violet, looking bright and happy, met me, holding my card on high.

“Guess what it is?”

Evidently Frank had said nothing of our meeting.

“Some stupid dinner?” I enquired, hypocritically.

“Better, much better—guess again.”

“A dance,” I quietly observed.

“No, no; at least yes—but a fancy ball—isn’t it glorious—at the Hall. Janet, won’t it be awfully jolly? Frank Conway has been suggesting such lovely dresses for us.”

“Us! Pray did he include Aunt?”

“Don’t be silly.”

“What did he say would suit you? *La belle aux cheveux d’or?*”

“No, but he promised to send over the big book of coloured costumes to choose from. So kind—”

“To give us ideas! very!” I interrupted.

“Don’t be severe and ungrateful, too, for he said you should go as Sappho.”

“Much obliged, Vy; I am not going to be burning Sappho, or any of those charmingly naughty Heathenesses. As a governess, a Gorgon or a Fate would be the only suitable classic dress—but alas! I must suit my purse, not my person!”

Aunt Anna joined us, and we went in to dinner.

In the evening Alfred and his wife came to talk over the great event.

Matilda pompously informed us she should go as Marie Stuart. It would be appropriate as a Stewart.

Violet looked taken a-back. I promptly rose to the occasion. *Noblesse oblige*—I am going as the most noble the Marquis of Montrose.

“As a man?” Matilda superciliously observed.

“As a Graham, you know,” I innocently retorted.

Mrs. Alfred looked indignant. Violet, to avert a storm, begged her to suggest some character for her.

"Night and morning," was the curt reply.

"Or twilight," Alfred added.

"I know exactly what will suit Violet. I shewed them a photograph of Nilson as Margharita. Isn't it lovely?"

Of course Matilda objected. It was not *the* thing for a young person.

"It would not do for an *old* one," I muttered.

The point was argued—ayes and noes—I agreed to count; but the cheapness of the simple costume carried the day; and when Alfred declared he should go as Mephisto, Aunt Anna was reconciled to the idea. After a little more fencing with Matilda, and a remark about "under-bred levity," the party broke up.

CHAPTER IV.

NO.

THE looked-for day came at last.

The ball was a great "success."

In the grounds, red Chinese lanterns hung here and there on the dark trees, the crimson balls shining like lurid jewels or strange fruits among the glossy laurels and evergreens.

In the conservatory a fountain threw up slender jets of water, sparkling amid the fragrant flowers, and murmuring a soft melody in harmony with the dreamy scene.

The spacious reception-rooms were full to overflowing. Music, floor, decorations, all were perfect. Violet's pure white dress and golden hair shone out in unrivalled beauty from the crowd of rouged and painted women—the gaudy costumes, tinsels, diamonds, silks, satins, mingled in a motley throng of confused colour. She and Frank made a well-matched couple, and many thought it "a case." I, too, fancied he must waver in his allegiance—she was so lovely and so loving.

With a sigh, I turned into the empty conservatory. The sigh was called forth by the news I had received from Mrs. Trevor, fixing my departure from England for the 24th.

The sigh was followed by a tear. Before another could follow, I heard Frank Conway's voice.

"You look wofully like Sternes, Maria."

Almost involuntarily I answered—"If I had but a dog to love me."

"Miss Graham — Janet!" he impatiently exclaimed; "you must know I love you, more than I can say. You are everything to me. You can make me the happiest or the most miserable of men. Oh, Janet! do you not love me, a little?"

He tried to take my hand.

"Do not, please; it can never—never be. Think of your mother."

"My mother idolizes me," he quietly answered.

"And you will break her heart. What am I? A shopkeeper's daughter, and older than you; I am, indeed. You must believe me. You are proud of your name—your family. I, too, am proud, too proud to enter a family upon sufferance.

"Janet! They will love you, if only you love me."

"If," I replied sadly. "No, I do like you, but I do not love you. No, no—no!"

"I cannot take this as a final answer—think it over—take time to consider—and pray, pray, put off this dreadful plan of yours, don't go abroad, wandering away in this independent manner—an unprotected female—I am sure no one can approve of it."

I drew myself up—laid my hand upon his arm. He seized and kissed it.

"Believe me—there is *no* hope. I am grateful for your love, for your flattering opinion, I shall always remember it, and possibly live to regret my decision, but it is final. Sometime hence you will thank me, and own I was the best judge for your happiness—and, and—think kindly of me—not harshly, believing I have ever tried to act honestly and rightly"—I paused. "Shake hands now, and wish me God

speed. I start on Friday, and who knows when we shall meet again."

My voice trembled. His face looked worn and white through the rouge. He kissed my hand, wrung it in his, until I could have screamed with pain, then he turned away and I was alone.

I dreaded returning 'to the ball-room—for once, my good star was in the ascendant. Matilda and Alfred were leaving, and pleading fatigue, as an excuse I left with them.

CHAPTER V.

UTRECHT.

A FAIR and uneventful voyage landed me in Rotterdam. Thence I took train to Utrecht.

I felt very desolate and helpless. How should I ever get my luggage together. The porter seemed hopelessly dense and stupid; not a conveyance to be seen, not a creature to direct me to my destination. I searched in my pocket-book for the Frejherrin's address and proceeded to shew it to the least stupid-looking of the stolid porters.

"Can I be of any use?"

The question was put in good English.

Gratefully I looked up at the speaker. I may well say looked up—he was more than common tall—and a handsome pleasant looking Englishman. As he lifted his hat I saw clustering curls of black hair, and an amused twinkle in his dark grey eyes. Colouring slightly, I gave him the card.

"Bilt Straat—the Frejherrin von Falkenstein. I know the house; it is not far. If you will allow me, I will go with you—your luggage can be sent on."

He gave the necessary order to the porter, who put my boxes on a truck, my new friend lending a helping hand, I thought, partly to ascertain my name, when, as if guessing my thought, he remarked in an easy tone: "I see your name is Graham—mine is Morris. Now we are introduced,

you will permit me to see you to the Freijherrin's door and show you any lions we may meet on our way."

I bowed and murmured my thanks.

"Is this your first visit to Holland?" he continued.

"Indeed, yes; I never was out of England before, and I feel strange and stupid, not understanding the language; but I daresay I shall soon get accustomed to the new ways. Dear me! what a very odd person."

A woman passed, wearing, under a lace cap, a golden skull cap, shining like a bald-head, and completely covering her hair. He laughed at my evident amusement.

"That's a Friesland woman. You will see some queer dresses and head-dresses if you stay till the 'Kermis'—fair time is the gay season for the peasants."

Our progress was arrested. The bridge we had to cross was drawn up, while a string of heavily-laden barges slowly passed through. We resumed our way past the market, where I noticed the painted carts with brass cans full of milk, drawn by the patient dogs, thence to the cathedral, with its tall tower near it, like the Campanile towers in Italy.

I began to suspect we were not taking the nearest way, and my idea was confirmed on my arrival at the Bilt Straat, where I found my luggage had preceded me.

"Shall you make a long stay here?" my companion asked.

British reserve prevented my confiding in a stranger, and the words, "I am a governess," were changed into a more cautious answer.

"It depends. Do you know the Freijherrin and her daughter?"

"I have met *her*—I know them by sight. Now, we are very near; but I must shew you the celebrated avenue spared by Tilly, under the 'grand monarque,' because of its beauty."

Together we walked, under the shade of the giant limes, through the famous Maliebaan—involuntarily our steps slackened, and as the time came to part, we lingered.

"When and where shall we meet again?" he inquired, as

we reached a white house, bright with green jalousies and numerous windows.

My heart was sinking; I felt as if I were losing a friend.

"We must meet again," he repeated, "perhaps in church."

"Thank you so much for your kindness." I said. "I hope to see you again."

"Good-bye! Miss Graham."

"Good-bye! Mr. Morris."

We parted.

CHAPTER VI.

DUTIES.

ENTERING a spacious white marble Hall, I followed the neatest of chambermaids into a lofty room hung with yellow silk, looking out upon the street. Pushing forward a heavy arm-chair, covered in faded yellow velvet, she left to announce me. I flew to the window. Through the gaily painted wire blind I saw my friend's tall form striding rapidly away. I was roused from my reverie by the Freijherrin's voice. In kind and broken English she made me welcome and hoped I should be happy with them. My pupils, Ida, and Coba, should do themselves the honour to shew Miss to her apartments.

Two pretty girls, about twelve and fourteen, came shyly forward. They left me in my room, where I indulged in a good cry, feeling intensely miserable, and regretting a long week must elapse before Sunday, when I should be comparatively free from the duties I had undertaken, which threatened to be more irksome than I had imagined. On Sunday I awoke in a benevolent frame of mind, and tied on my bonnet cheerfully, giving a last look at myself in the unbecoming greenish glass, my only mirror, before starting off for the English Church.

I tripped lightly along the Maliebaan, and on my way met not a creature I knew, not a face I had ever seen before.



In a strange land, in a strange church, surrounded by strangers, my thoughts wandered back to the pretty village church at home, and my eyes filled with tears. I recalled Lady Frances, rustling down the aisle with flowing robes and portly figure, eclipsing little Mr. Conway; Frank, in the great square-curtained pew, sitting so as to command a view of our seats. Violet's sweet face rose as a fair vision before me, her bright hair gleaming from under the velvet toque jauntily crowning the golden pile; Aunt Anna, always well and becomingly dressed; in my desolation I even found myself thinking, not unkindly, of Matilda, flounced, feathered, and furbelowed.

The earnest tones of the clergyman roused me, and listening to the words of peace and rest, I put away thoughts of the past, and found such comfort as I needed * * * *

I was getting accustomed to the monotonous life, and there was a certain charm in the even regularity of my humdrum existence. My pupils were progressing, but, I acknowledged too late, that I had rashly determined to be a governess, not taking into consideration that something more than a good education and a smattering of accomplishments is wanted. Without the art and love of teaching, it is, at best, but a badly-performed duty. I liked the young girls, and honestly tried my best; they seconded me admirably, but the Baroness was more pleased with me than I was myself.

(*To be continued.*)





THE FOREST OF MELFORD.

A Story of the Day in which we Live.

By A. J. DUFFIELD.

One of the Authors of "Masston; a Story of these
Modern Days," &c., &c.

CHAPTER XXI.

"The downs. Compare you the Alps with them? If you could jump on the back of an eagle you might. The Alps have height, but the downs have swiftness. Those long stretching lines of the downs are greyhounds in full career. To look at them is to set the blood racing. Speed is on the downs, glorious motion, odorous air of sea and herb, exquisite as in the isles of Greece. And the continental travelling ninnies leave England for health—run off—and forth from the downs to the steamboat, the railway, the steaming hotel, the tourists' shivering mountain-top in search of sensation. There, on the downs, the finest and liveliest are at their bidding, ready to fly through them like hosts of angels."—GEORGE MEREDITH.

FWE would know one of the great books of the world, say, the Don Quixote, we must read it many times during a period of twenty years, and some of its more excellent passages many more times, getting them fixed in the heart; we may then proceed to compare the chief translations which have been made of it in a course of two centuries and a half, then what all the men of genius in the wide world have written upon it, which will be found

to be very little. After that, we may stir ourselves to discover the influence which the book once had in the country where it first appeared, but which is now lost, and we can then ask ourselves why lost, and what the amount of that loss to the Spanish people really is. We can then go on to enquire how the book was first received in England, and who are the people who still read it? which country of the world most cherishes it, and has taken the most pains to understand it; which loves it least—and what answers to these questions will stand most the test of a long probe? And when a man has done all that, he may be supposed to know the *Don Quixote*, of Miguel de Cervantes, but it can never be said of mortal man that he knows a forest, study it as he may, and study it for ever. Such a forest at least, as the Forest of Melford, with its still lakes of green sward, its ocean of leaves, its array of trees, the fairies that dance beneath its moons, or ride on roseate beams of the noonday sun. Unlike its Creator, it is full of variableness; the shadows of its turning are constant, incalculable, but delightful, and so tempered to the weakness of our mortal vision of its brightness, that it yields to us a soothing charm, a bewitching comfort, a mysterious solace. And we are not to wonder therefore, that when Estrid and Quicksett last met they agreed to pass another day in the forest together.

"Yes," said Quicksett to Estrid, "there you find indeed tongues in trees; but you will find no tongue that will be able to fix for you the length and depth of the forest itself—no, nor what it whispers to one human heart in one of its myriad moods."

"And yet this cannot be the first, or only great forest you have seen," remarked Estrid, slightly bending the beautiful little sea-shell of her left ear, to catch for herself, or to compel what should be said, into murmurs to be only heard by her.

"That is true," he said; "but, with the exception of Fontainbleau, I cannot recall a forest which is so full of varied yet constant beauty as Melford."

"I have heard travellers say," said Estrid, "that nearly all the well-known forests of the world carry some show of

the national character. Do you think that means that the people's habits, their dress, or way of life have been shaped by any unconscious or deliberate yielding up of themselves to the influence which their woods and forests may have held over them?"

"The poets," said Quicksett, with animation, "who are the only interpreters of science, as they are of nature, would most assuredly tell you so. It is difficult to conceive that the North American Indians did not deliberately contemplate their maple woods when bathed in autumnal gold and roses, on purpose 'to keep the pulses of their heart in motion.' I have seen some of their chiefs in full dress, but never saw one in his fine mocassins fringed with painted quills, his coloured feathers and bright-tinted skins, but was forced to believe that I was looking on a maple tree in the Thousand Islands of the St. Laurence which the sun himself had decked."

As all this was private talk, we may well suppose that it was not intended for display, although it did not fail to excite attention; besides, we must remember that your true lover does not talk of love when he is most busy in making it. Love is only a subject of talk among those who have ceased to feel its power, or obey its motions, or who have never been bowed to its sway.

"There can be no doubt that there are Spanish forests as well as English, French as well as German," said Estrid, "and each would lose its character were it to be brought to England, say, or if Melford were to be carried to Andalucia."

"Yes, for one thing," said Quicksett, with a gesture of shyness; "we should lose the sweet and lowly grass, which registers for us the 'the beautiful dallying of earth and heaven,' for it would be speedily burnt up by the fervent heat, or perish for lack of water, or be overrun with brambles; and then the trees, to escape being strangled, would so hurry up towards the light and warmth of the sun, that they would become, in their proud and selfish haste, haughty and mean, unbeautiful in life and useless when dead."

After a pause, Estrid said—

"I think that never till now have I thought that all trees are more beautiful when they spring from grass."

"Or are surrounded by it," answered Quicksett; "for you know that the grass which creeps into, or strives to stay in close company with, the majesty of, say, King Oak, speedily withers and dies. And I have never lost sight of that line of Chaucer—

"In which were oakes great, straight as a line,
Under the which the grass so fresh of hue
Was newly sprung;"

And would like for some honest interpretation of it. I am loath to suppose that English grass was stronger to bear the presence of majesty five hundred years ago than it is now, or that the presence of kings has become, in the course of our progress, malignant to all lowly life when brought in close contact with it, and I certainly decline to believe that our poet did not know what he was saying when he wrote those lines."

"Did not the olive refuse to be made king over the trees, as well as the fig and the vine?" enquired Estrid, in a tone of surprised knowledge.

"Yes, lest they should forsake their sweetness and good fruit; and it was only the bramble who consented to be crowned, on condition that the trees came and put their trust in its shadow," and Quicksett was compelled to laugh to avoid dropping into a serious argument, while Estrid, who was also not without skill, here made a sign as careless as was possible to her, which seemed to say to Quicksett, "I think we must not keep this pleasant discourse to ourselves."

The rest of the people in the room had good-naturedly dropped all conversation, and were keeping silence, no doubt with the design of not interrupting the delightful talk then proceeding between Estrid and Quicksett; and yet it may be safely averred that they would have been much wearied by the discourse of the two lovers. But the talk ceased, not because of the silence which suddenly fell on everybody, but because Estrid willed that it should cease. She was quick to perceive the approach of what might produce pain in others—a human failing which invariably brings abundance

of pain to its victims ; for if two or three people who have met together to show off their jewels, or how they do up their hair, or for any other modern Christian motive, discover that one of their number lacks, as they suppose, the necessary selfishness to defend or assert herself, or who gives way even by one poor charitable desire for the general good, expressed even by a mere gesture, she is speedily pounced upon by all the rest and made a butt for the pointed arrows which the frivolous and vain know so well how to shoot.

That love-talk which I have repeated above took place in the presence of Mrs. Strawless and several Mulberry women, all dressed as fine as peacocks, all were ardent adorers of the Bishop of Mulberry, who held strong opinions on his opinions, and would have given their bodies to be burned in defence of them, yet, unheard of strangeness ; these very women were, there and then, eager only after one thing, and that was that they might tear out Estrid's eyes.

Quicksett was not slow to perceive that he had made Estrid an object of hatred among these Christian matrons, and he proposed to himself to undo that wrong for her sake. He did not care for these women the weight of a feather, and nothing would have given him greater delight than to put them all into a frying pan, over some red-hot coals, slowly move them about like eggs and bacon, and serve them up hissing to be devoured by Gog and Magog.

So he said—

“ Have you been to the theatre lately, Mrs. Strawless ? ”

“ Theatre ! ” exclaimed that lady, “ I was never in a theatre in all my life ; I am quite insulted to be asked such a question.”

“ Quite shocking, I’m sure,” said another.

“ I suppose,” added a third, in green silk, and with as many pearls sprinkled over her as if she had been caught in a shower of them, “ I suppose you go often in London ? ”

“ I always go when I have the chance of seeing a good play or a fine actor,” answered Quicksett, with a wrath-inspiring sweetness.

“ And how would you like to die in a theatre ? ” enquired a timid-looking little woman, quite plain, but richly dressed,

and evidently accustomed to bear "her testimony," as she called it.

"I should like it of all things," said Quicksett.

"And you would face your Maker in that condition?" continued the dear little zealot.

"Yes," said Quicksett, "I would not even take off my gloves, and, I think, just for manners, I should keep on my crush hat."

"Sir," continued the champion of the Mulberry Cross, a copy of which she wore round her neck in yellow metal, "I beg to be excused from joking on sacred things."

"I am not joking," said Quicksett, quietly, "I am quite serious, and I must repeat that I would rather be carried up to Judgment while I was laughing or crying, or cursing the villain of the piece, than while I was on my knees in church."

Estrid could not suppress a decided smile at this banter, but she said nothing. In the meanwhile Mrs. Strawless had risen in great haste, and proceeded to call her husband as if the house was on fire, who came, flushed with his hundred-guinea port, from the dining room into the drawing room.

"Michael," she said, in a wonderful rage, "I have been grossly insulted by this gentleman. He must apologise. I have never been so insulted in my life, never; it is dreadful. I feel as if we were all going to be swallowed up, like Dakins and Byron in last Sunday's lesson."

Strawless, who was not a fool, and who was at that moment good-naturedly drunk, said, "It was not Dakins and Byron, but Dathan and Abiram; you've made a mistake, Bessy," and while he was cajoling his wife, Estrid and Quicksett left the room, returned and said a hearty good-bye to Mrs. Strawless, and were never more seen in that house.

To the surprise of Jack Newton, his sister gave no sign of regret for being kept at home when Mr. Hillen told her of the intended ride through the Forest. On the contrary, she appeared to be thoroughly resigned to the dictates of Pretor Robertus; expressed a hope that they would all enjoy themselves, and begged to be told of all that might happen when they came back.

The next day came, and with it Dr. Brydges, on a fine

horse, dressed in white corduroys, Hessian boots, and a black ribbon, which connected his hat with a button hole—an attire he had not assumed since he was at Oxford. Ethel, who had heard so much of Brydges, was anxious to see him, and "made" Jack Newton convey an invitation to him to join the party in the Forest, a thing which Newton reluctantly did, at the same time expressing his conviction that Dr. Brydges would not come.

On his arrival the Doctor found Ethel in her riding habit, seated at the side of Miss Newton, and Ethel was so much impressed with Brydges's handsome looks and figure—so admirably set off by his riding dress—that she began to ply him with her blue eyes, as if they had been made for no other purpose than to behold fine men.

"You are much better," he said, addressing Harriet, and giving her his hand; "I hope you slept all night."

"I am quite well. I did sleep as usual, thanks; this is my friend, Miss Hillen, who sent you the invitation for to-day. I am sure I could ride quite well."

"You don't care for riding, Miss Hillen," said the imperious Doctor, "pray accept my thanks for your very kind invitation. Couldn't you stay with Miss Newton? I will promise to bring you all the news, and to tell you how every lady was dressed, and who rode the best, and what sport we get."

Brydges completely astonished Ethel by his beauty, his grave, yet delightful manners, his mastery over everything, as well as herself, and apparently over everybody else, so she acquiesced, with a pleased laugh. Harriet protested, but Brydges had his own way, and he and Jack Newton left the two ladies together, with as much to talk about as if they had been to a fair.

Ethel, of course, reminded the Doctor that he must explain to Miss Fount, her father, and the others, how she came to remain behind.

"I shall tell them, not that you are an angel, but that you have proved to me how easy it will be for you to become one," said Brydges, with a formality that might have been construed into fun, and with that the two men went out.

"What a day this is," said the Doctor to his companion, now throwing his eyes to the blue sky, then looking straight before him into the woods, and taking in deep draughts of air, he said. "Here one can breathe; this horse knows as well as I do that we are going into a new and better world. How well the lady rides, yonder."

"Yes," said Jack Newton, "that is Miss Fount, who has made greater havoc among the girls than all the men put together, she is certainly very beautiful, and as fine as she is good. I am sorry I have seen so little of her, indeed have hardly spoken to her, it is quite my own fault; and now that she is about to leave us, I feel ashamed of myself for not having seen her oftener."

"Then Miss Fount is the lady whom Thyme raves about so much, and the author of 'The Civil Guard?' Pray introduce me, I must thank her in person for the service she has done me," said Brydges.

"That is the lady," said Newton, "but I think some one else raves much more about her than Salter Thyme, only in a different way, and my own impression is that Miss Fount is as much interested in my friend Arthur Quicksett as he is in her."

"This," said Brydges, "is very touching," and turning to Newton, he continued, "you are not touched yourself."

"Not a bit; I own, however, that, had not my friend been in the way, I too would have ridden much in the forest on the chance of trying my luck," said Jack.

"Your friend has been making investigations, I understand, into the ownership of the forest," said the Doctor. "Who is the gentleman now riding with Miss Fount?"

"He, I think, is Mr. Bond. Yes, Quicksett is convinced that the Crown lands have been largely built over, those of the College have been extensively enclosed, and the acres belonging to the Grammar School of Mulberry have now been irrevocably covered up with stucco and stone; the public lands remain, but there is no owner to claim them."

"This," said Brydges, "is marvellous, indeed; here are splendid trees, and an ancient sward, a stretch of country of unrivalled beauty, and over all a pure sky, and the owners

can't be found, or can't be reconciled to their grand possessions. This puts me in mind of the Methodist hymn I once heard sung at a revival meeting in Yorkshire.

' Why should the children of a king
Go mourning all their days ? '

No one seemed able to answer the question, which appears to be similar to this : ' Why do the people of Mulberry not come and enjoy their lands ; ' and who knows but the true answer may be, Because there is no one to sing to them

' Come into the garden Maud '

to the right tune. We are a highly complicated set of creatures in Mulberry." And Brydges continued his admiration of the dells and brakes, the many vistas through the trees, and the rolling billows of thymy turf over which they rode.

Newton reminded the Doctor of his proposal to become Constable of Melford Forest, and if he were still of the same opinion with regard to it. He answered :

" I am more convinced than ever that I should lose my character as the Chief of the Civil Guard " (and here Brydges raised his hat to Miss Fount still riding in front, and as if to thank her for that word) " if I were to propose such a thing. This glorious piece of the world belongs, in the inevitable course of things, to the rich, and if I were to say or do anything to the contrary I should be treated as a lunatic and deprived of office."

For all that, Brydges paid great attention to Newton's talk, and when Jack informed him that Quicksett had been recalled to London in a sudden and unexpected manner he said to Newton that he thought that looked suspicious : for Brydges had a much more intimate knowledge of the ways of the great men of Mulberry than any one thought for. " But let us join the rest now," he said; and the two galloped over the yielding earth, which seemed to rejoice at feeling the pressure of dancing feet.

Newton and Bond were but slightly acquainted ; the latter, therefore, bowed and said, " Pray have you seen Mr. Quicksett ? "

Jack, glancing at the lady, replied : " We thought he must be close at hand, and rode after him, as we imagined. Let me introduce to you, my friend, Dr. Brydges ? "

" We have not seen him," said Bond ; " and he promised to meet me here at twelve. How are you, Doctor ? " said Bond, in a voice which denoted some acquaintance with Brydges ; and it is true that many did know the Doctor of whom he had little or no knowledge himself.

Brydges, however, was occupied in regarding the lady, of whom he had heard so much, but had not seen till then. On turning a corner of a narrow path in which they were at that time riding, two other horsemen were espied, standing still, and apparently waiting for the others to come up. The lady rode off to join them, much to Brydges' chagrin. He was about to introduce himself, and thought he had a right to do so on the score of indebtedness in that matter of the title for his gentle police. He could not well follow her. She was certainly very handsome, and of an uncommon good temper, Brydges thought : and although, as a rule, he preferred little women, there was, in this lady, with her proud neck and splendid bust, a winning grace which made even Robert Brydges confess that he too was a mortal man ; he thought also that he had never seen a face till then which made him

" Own
That through her eye the Immortal shone ;
On her fair cheeks unfading line,
The young pomegranate's blossoms strew
Their bloom, in blushes ever new."

and how she rode—and how glorious all things were in Melford Forest. Still he did not forget to look back to a fair face whose eyes were of violet hue, and whose habitual expression was a playful yielding, mingled with a quality for fighting and endurance, which would take rank before all other quality in the world of women ; and as he compared the one lying at home in enforced quiet to the other sailing before him over the motionless Melford Ocean he thought that he preferred the spirited little unicorn to the proud and splendid swan.

They had reached the Roman Camp, and the lady paired off with the younger of the two horsemen, and disappeared through the winding dyke which Quicksett had discovered for himself some days before, and which, as we said, formed a natural boundary to Bond's property.

Here Bond drew rein, and the four horsemen, of whom one was Jim Margreaves, came to a stand. This was the rendezvous where all were appointed to meet, and Quicksett, one of the most important of the company, had not yet turned up. Business was to be combined with pleasure, and the Commissioner, in the presence of Margreaves, was to help Stephen Bond in settling the boundary lines of his land.

Brydges and Newton were occupied in examining the outline of the remarkable place in which they found themselves, now covered with a thousand soft and tender grasses, and all the grim features of ancient strife and bloodshed obliterated, or rather replaced by new hands, helped by the fairies, the birds of the air, and the flowers of the field.

Brydges was enjoying a bliss he had not known since he was a boy. "And this is the Forest of Melford!" he would exclaim. "Here is a sanatorium without money and without price, the great therapeutic of Mulberry, gratis; the vast and infallible salutary, restorative, tonic, sedative, corroborant, analiptic, and disinfectant establishment for a quarter of a million of souls, and not one making any use of it." Then, turning to Newton, he said, "Very beautiful, no doubt, but I shouldn't think suitable for Thyme." He was now referring to the lady.

Newton was more than ever drawn close to Brydges—there was a helpful sympathy in all the Doctor said and did, a manful unselfishness which roused to exertion, and a good humour which killed time and banished care.

"It is now," he continued, "evident to me that an unmerciful providence has ordered my steps to this place, in order to give me timely warning that my physicking days are numbered. I have invested, or my father did for me, a matter of three or four thousand pounds in learning the art and mystery of healing (by this time the other two had joined Newton and the Doctor), and I discover a hospital—

a dispensary—and a thousand willing doctors who can dispense with my valuable services, and do greater cures than I can for nothing. It now becomes a question with me whether there is anything immoral in my keeping this secret to myself. If I go and tell all I know of this land of health and healing, I shall not only lose all interest on my magnificent investment, my occupation will be like that of Othello's; therefore, in the words of another operator in human flesh,

‘Give me my principal and let me go.’”

There was much laughter at this, dashed with a little biting of the upper lip of one of them, as the Doctor, who had now dismounted, continued his speech—

“ So these are the people’s lands, well, well—‘the ox knoweth its owner, and the ass its master’s crib.’ I will not finish the sentence ; but if my degree of M.D. is about to be reduced to the value of the parchment on which it is written, I shall apply for the office of Ranger of Melford Forest.”

And although Jim Margreaves laughed with the others, he still kept up that occasional biting of his upper lip at the dreadful truths which even he discovered in Brydges’s jokes. Margreaves was a good-natured enough fellow, but he was narrow ; he had none of the plotting powers of his friend Strawless, but he was equally fond of money, and, like all the rich men of Mulberry, he, too, was hungering and thirsting after land. For a man in Mulberry or Melford who could afford to buy land and be without it, or indifferent to it, would be to come into the contempt which is given to a man of wealth and station going to Church without holding the right of a pew to sit in, who has no gilt-book to hold in his hand during the psalms, nor a guinea hat, in which to make his first act of obeisance to the unseen Supreme. There was no doubt that Margreaves was very well off. He had the finest garden of all his neighbours, he grew the most beautiful of flowers, and, as we have seen, he knew how to bestow them with liberality and to advantage. But this was not accounted sufficient for an entrance into the full glory and power of the kingdom of Mulberry, and he would certainly be damned if

he did not acquire the palm and garment of land to fit him for a place on one of its thrones or at its wedding feasts. It is quite likely that Margreaves would still have wavered, until a more convenient season should come, if Stephen Bond had not, in his sedate, and modest way, proposed to sell to him the Roman Camp. This put a different complexion on things ; Stephen was to be trusted, the transaction would be quiet, and both could keep their own council. The proposal, however, as has been seen, got wind in Mulberry, for although Margreaves could implicitly rely upon Bond, he had no such confidence in himself, and in making one or two private enquiries the cat had been let out of the bag. In the matter of land nothing could be kept secret in Mulberry except the method of stealing it.

In the midst of Brydges's talk there came up at a hand gallop Estrid and Quicksett.

"Very sorry to be late," said Quicksett, going to Bond and shaking hands, who then introduced him to Margreaves, and Quicksett at once recollect ed the face of the generous donor of flowers, and the two, led by Bond, proceeded at a walking pace to thread the windings of the embossed dyke.

Estrid went at once to Jack Newton to speak of his sister Harriet, and to say how glad she was that there was no cause for alarm, and that she had been so well attended.

"This," said Jack, introducing Brydges, "is my friend, the Doctor."

On which, of course, Estrid made an apologetic bow to one whom she had had the rudeness to praise to his face ; but she also gave him a smile which appeared to console him for what he might have suffered.

Brydges, who could stand a good deal of praise without being spoiled, much less without losing his presence of mind, asked Estrid in which direction ran the sunken mossy passage which they then were threading through the forest.

To which Estrid answered, "She could not tell," and Brydges would have held the lady in his contempt for not being able to keep in her mind the direction of a path she had traversed only within half-an-hour ; but then she was so gracious, and so evidently happy, and full of the inspiring

air, and did such justice to his own praise of the forest, that he ceased to think of it, so occupied was he with Estrid, whose beauty fascinated him.

She was now talking with Jack Newton, and learning further particulars of Harrie's fall, which Jack knew how to give to one of whose great tenderness of heart he had heard so much.

As Estrid conversed with Newton, and Brydges watched the bloom on her face, the play of deep but tender sympathy around her mouth, and the full discernment, the exorable mind which came from the far-off glance of her clear soft eyes, he thought to himself, "Here is one on whom man's cruelty may bring an enduring sorrow," and as if to take some share in helping her against so wicked a fate, or to resent it, he went to her and said with all the music he could throw into his speech.

"Is not this most beautiful, Miss Fount?"

"It is so beautiful that I half wish I had not come again to see it. I have come to bid it farewell," said Estrid.

"Ah, that is a mistake," said the dictatorial Robert; "you can't defraud yourself of so much good without weakening the strength you will need to bear the inevitable evil."

"What, pray, may be the inevitable evil?" enquired Estrid, who thought she perceived beneath the professional garb and stiffness of Brydges an unwonted human kindness; and it is true that this Doctor of Medicine could put on, as he then did, a garment of tenderness as easily as he could don his policeman's attire.

So he said "the flight of youth." And he said it with a smile, but a smile not of his own making, being born of an intrusive assuetude and now beyond control or recall.

Estrid did not appear to care for this. Brydges had a quick mind, and sometimes suffered from the mistakes of others, because he gave people of his own class credit for being as full of a certain kind of knowledge as himself; or, perhaps, because he would not condescend to an explanation. This reply to Estrid is a case in point; he wanted to remind her in a poetical way of the advice of the Preacher about

the days of her youth, and had ended in breaking down as a bore, and all because he disdained to make himself clear on a point so simple. But if people are ashamed to be found quoting the Bible they ought to be made to suffer for it in some way.

Estrid was happy. Those who knew her best most noted the change; but not more than two or three persons knew to what cause to attribute it. At any other time she would have invited Brydges to further conference, for she perceived him to be a man of earnest purpose, gentleness and delicacy. But she was full of the wondrous beauties of the forest; its rose-coloured light gleamed especially for her; no one else appeared to regard it as did she. The grass was no less besprent with flowers than the trees and bushes were covered with painted berries and red and yellow leaves, which made the forest eloquent of love; and its tongue-tied simplicity declared a glory she had never known till then.

She was indeed doing that which Brydges meant to invite her to the performance of; she was, let us hope, storing some of that honey which can turn winter into summer, or of that manna which enables a pilgrim of love to walk through the wilderness of this world and fear no evil.

"Where do you think Miss Fount changed her horse?" Brydges enquired of Newton as they rode home together.

Jack did not think she had changed horses. He had never seen her ride any other than the black hunter which she was then sitting.

"I tell you that when we last rode behind that most gracious figure, Miss Fount was riding a chestnut mare."

And Jack Newton, turning to look at the Doctor, saw such an expression of determination on his face, that he did not contradict him. This was the second error into which the imperious Robert had fallen with regard to that one lady.

"How long have you known your friend Mr. Quicksett, Newton?" enquired Brydges.

"Some six or seven years. We were at Cambridge, and we have knocked about together a good deal in various parts."

"I suppose, then, he is very well off?" mused the Doctor.

"I don't know," was the reply.

This could not be called a mere idle question on the part of the chief of the Civil Guard, for he never put idle questions to anyone. It is quite likely that it came from that practical habit of mind which had fitted him for the post of head of the gentle police of Mulberry.

He kept his promise to Harriet to return and give account of what had passed with them in the Forest, but found himself so occupied with the impression which Estrid had made upon him, that he had forgotten everything else, and, almost, to keep his word. But, as was his custom, he went straight to the point, and even parted with some of his own private thoughts and feelings about the lady whom he had, on so little acquaintance, admired so much.

"At first I did not like Miss Fount," said Harriet, "but I soon discovered that what I did not like was what I found lacking in myself, and which she discovered to me, and then I came to love her more than I ever loved anyone."

To all of which Brydges listened with much patience and great interest, pretending to be absorbed in the quality and service of the tea he was then sipping rather than in Miss Harriet's description of her first acquaintance with Estrid.

"She saved my life," said Ethel, unwilling to be behind in her praise of one whom she found to be so great a favourite in the talk, on which there passed more laudation of Estrid, and more silent and pleased attention on the part of the observant Robert, who simply said—

"It is just what I should have expected of her." On which he took his leave, giving his hand to Harriet, and a majestic bow to Ethel, who noticed it, and confided to her friend that she thought she too must go to Cupid's Alley and see if she could find an adventure for herself, or do something to make her into a patient; "but then, if I did," she said, in a musical recitative, "my medical attendant would not fail to be a man of sixty, with a shirt collar up to his ears, and a snuff-box hanging from his nose."

Harriet could not help laughing, which appeared to hasten the departure of Ethel. Soon after, Estrid came with Mr. Hillen to see if the Newtons would come to dinner; it was Miss Fount's last day, and she was to return to town on the morrow.

Harriet was startled at this announcement, and rang the bell for her brother, who, on coming into the room, and unexpectedly seeing Estrid there, in the full bloom which the ride in the forest had brought upon her face, was made to feel a turbulence of emotions, which were as new to him as they were delightful.

"We shall be most happy to come on this melancholy occasion," he said; which rather silly speech, to Harriet's surprise, made Estrid smile.

Harriet was not quite sure if she ought to go; but on Mr. Hillen promising her that he would take care that she did not exceed two bottles—or say, in consequence of its being a farewell feast, two bottles and a-half, and that he would be responsible to Dr. Brydges—she went.

The other people who that day had met in our forest also went their several ways; Margaret returned with Uncle Bond and Jim Margreaves to Mulberry, George Chetwon remained at the Croft, and Arthur Quicksett, after dining with the Hillens, took the last train up to town.

CHAPTER XXII.



"I now purchased a piece of land, and built a 'cave' for myself. I really can't tell to the present day who I purchased the land from, for there were about fifty different claimants, every one of whom assured me that the other forty-nine were humbugs, and had no right whatever. The nature of the different titles of the different claimants was various. One man said his ancestors had killed off the first owners; another declared his ancestors had driven off the second party; another man, who seemed to be listened to with more respect than ordinary, declared that his ancestor had been the first possessor of all, and had never been ousted, and that this ancestor was a huge lizard that lived in a cave on the land many ages ago; and sure enough there was the cave to prove it. Besides the principal claims there was an immense number of secondary ones—a sort of latent equities—which had laid dormant until it was known that the pakeha had his eye on the land. Some of them seemed to me at the time odd enough. One man required payment

because his ancestors, as he affirmed, had exercised the right of catching rats on it, but which he (the claimant) had never done, for the best of reasons—i.e., there were no rats to catch, except, indeed, pakeha rats, which were plenty enough; but this variety of rodent was not counted as game. Another claimed because his grandfather had been murdered on the land; and another claimed payment because his grandfather had committed the murder. Then half the country claimed payment of various value, from one fig of tobacco to a musket; on account of a certain *Wahi tapu*, or ancient burying-ground which was on the land, and in which every one almost had had relations—or rather ancestors, buried, as they could make out, in old times, though no one had been deposited in it for almost, two hundred years, and the bones of the others had been (as they said) removed long ago to a torere in the mountains. It seemed an awkward circumstance that there was some difference of opinion as to where this same *Wahi tapu* was situated, for in case of my buying the land, it was stipulated that I should fence it round and make no use of it, although I had paid for it. * * * I am now a landed proprietor, clear of all claims and demands and have an undeniable right to hold my estate as long as ever I am able."—*Old New Zealand, a Tale of the Good Old Times.* Edited by LORD PEMBROKE, p. 60.

THE amused and gentle reader will be pleased to know that the above comical description of land tenure in New Zealand is all that will be said in this story, of the manner of holding lands in Mulberry, or in any other part of our beloved country—except this—that it is a fair representation of our legal procedure; of our own titles, under other names of the occasional claims set up by wicked and covetous people who sigh and cry for occupation of land.

The true words that are spoken in jest in our own day are numerous and bitter, they seem to increase every month of our lives; what more scathing satire can be produced than this piece of Lord Pembroke's "Tale of the Good Old Times," wherein we see, as in a mirror, that our own pleas, and claims, and title to the soil—our common mother—vie with those of a barbarous people, some of whose methods of acquiring land and holding it, are precisely the same as our own. Fraud in New Zealand in the Pakeha's times was accomplished by means of spilling a sort of red ink,

called blood, and precisely the same kind of fraud with us is effected by what are called arguments, in a court, called a court of justice, in which the most accursed injustice, which can clothe the heavens themselves with black, is frequently perpetrated.

But the most withering jest which carries truest word in our own case is that musical one recorded in our eighth chapter, in which Standish Riverton shadowed forth some of the future owners of the Forest of Melford ; and Riverton who was not much given to the acquisition of useful knowledge, must have had some considerable opportunity for the exercise of his powers of observation.

Cautiously treading through the dark ways of the forest, some of the Directors of the Great Stern Railway, like tigers, established their lairs, frightened away all other creatures, and made themselves masters of thousands of acres of the loveliest flower gardens in creation.

This was done through the instrumentality of Strawless, the elder. That zealous agent of the Dons of Saint Petroleum, that eager, self-elected detective policeman of a "Viper Oligarchy" had not screwed £50,000 out of the Mulberry men for building the new church, and promised nothing in return.

Lamb, the great picture dealer, had given largely, but at the same time he put Strawless up to an idea, by means of which he was to feather his own nest, and his, Lamb's; at the same time.

"Write," said the man of pictures to Strawless, "to the Bursar of the College, and say that you can find sufficient money to fight their title in Chancery if they will stand by you in the claim you will make. I will set to work and build a handsome house whenever you begin to build the church, and we must tell our secret to one or two others. Sir James Bomzley ought to know of it, and Rabens, and Coppersmith of course, who will each do the same. What about this young lord ?"

"Oh, Paramount," said Strawless, thoughtfully. "True, I should think there would be no difficulty there."

"Difficulty, not a bit of it," said the picture dealer. "These

fellows are always ready to snap at a few thousands in ready cash : will you write to him now, at once?"

Strawless promised to do so, and added, "I think, do you know, that the best way after all will be to sound the Great Stern Board about it. If we don't let Sir Potipher into the swim we shall have him against us, and then all the fat will be in the fire."

"Well, as you are a member of the Board, and Bomzley, Rabins, and one or two others of us," said Lamb, "there will be no harm in that, only take care that Sir Potipher commits himself at once.

"Look here," continued the picture-trickster, excited with his own poetical creations, "find out what this lord will take for his rights—perhaps, after all, he hasn't got any—and you can hint at that ; say that you are prepared to come down liberal, that you will put up the lands for sale by public auction, which can be privately done, tell him, and that you will, in addition, give him a certain share of the proceeds. One of the best titles *we* can have to our lands, will be to buy them at a sale. I'll square Minstrel."

Minstrel was a well-known auctioneer.

Now, as the god of flies would have it, soon after that these two plotters of the destruction of Melford Forest had separated, the mid-day post brought a letter bearing the London post mark, from Mr. Fount to Strawless, enquiring if he, Strawless, could raise a matter of £10,000 on some portions of the Melford Manor?

By this means was Strawless marshalled the way that he was going, at any rate, his way was made smooth, and he was also saved from being the inceptor of any underhand proceeding or other that might be construed against him. He telegraphed to Fount that the "ten thousand could be done, if it were done quickly."

The Bishop of Mulberry was profoundly moved by the munificent contributions which had been so spontaneously made for building the new church at Melford. It made him rejoice to think that in this age of material progress higher things were not lost sight of, that the Church's influence was still strong, and, however much it might be

doubted by some, God was still with them. In communicating the joyful tidings to Bursar Parlour, the Bishop suggested that the gift of the new living should alternately lie in the hands of the college and his own, beginning with himself. "No one," continued his lordship "has suggested to me what I am about to communicate to you, but I think it would be a graceful return if the college were to relinquish a considerable portion of their manorial rights, for the purpose of inducing a large and influential settlement on lands in the neighbourhood of the new church."

The Bishop must have forgotten in writing that letter that the subject of building a fashionable quarter in that part of the forest where the church was to be built emanated from Michael Strawless assisted by the Reverend Salter Thyme.

"By what name shall we call the new church?" enquired the Bishop of many different people, as he went about paying pastoral visits, and the answers he received were various.

"What name my dear Mrs. Strawless would you like to call the new church?"

On which that good and ample person began to ooze smiles, and to bow her head in a senseless way as if she were some mechanical figure of an Eastern monarch displaying an angular intoxication of joy. "She couldn't tell."

Of course she couldn't. She could only laugh, as Sarah did when she was promised a baby in her old age. Still she took great pleasure to herself, not only because the Bishop then consulted her, but because Michael, her husband, had taken such a foremost part in raising the money for the building.

"Your lordship won't have any candles, I'm sure," said Mrs. Strawless, or chausables, or bulbs, and other popish stuff."

"Candles," said the dear, old gentleman, "should give no offence, nor be the cause of stumbling to any one. The seven churches of Asia used candlesticks, and in one of the characters of the Divine Head of the Church, He is shown as walking in the midst of golden candlesticks. The chasuble is quite another matter, so also the alb, these are vestments, which, if properly appreciated, would be found provocative of devotion. I have no doubt of it; but I shall waive my own

personal feeling in a matter which is so little understood, and at present so warmly canvassed."

Mrs. Strawless mentioned something about a confession-box and said she had been told that if any of these things got into the church "while it was being confiscated, that they would be confiscated too," and could not be taken out again. "Confession, indeed," she added with a scornful toss of her head.

Here the Bishop concluded a somewhat lengthy visit and proceeded elsewhere.

"By what name would you like the new church called?" continued the Bishop to question the rich, the beautiful, as well as the blooming ladies of the capital of his See, and some said one thing, some another, one young lily-like form, putting her hands together, as if in prayer, and meekly raising her eyes to the Bishop's face, faintly murmured, "Saint Winifred, my lord." And the Bishop thought it very good and stroked her hair, in a fatherly way, and said he would see what could be done. The Bishop was endeavouring to please not only all men, but all women, and this he did by exciting in them the lust of power, and the affectation of a taste which he never intended to gratify, but which he thought useful to "promote," which, surely, is not commendable conduct in a Bishop, and reminds us of the sage words of the great Lord Bacon when treating of the small points of conduct in which learned men are oftentimes found lacking, and the Bishop of Mulberry was a learned man. "They do many times fail to observe decency and discretion in their behaviour, and carriage, and commit errors in small and ordinary points of action, so as the vulgar sort of capacities do make a judgment of them in greater matters by that which they find wanting in them in smaller."

"Michael," said Mrs. Strawless to her husband, one day, soon after the above, "I hear the Bishop is going to call the Melford church 'Winnypig.' I never heard of such a scandalous thing. Mark my words, if that church is called Winnypig, it'll be filled with nothing but fashionable hussies, as'll soon drive all decent people out of it—and then I know what'll follow—but you won't catch me going, that's all.

Now, Michael, if that church is called Winnypig, I'll never darken its door—there, now!"

Strawless calmed his wife by telling her that the name of the church had that day been fixed as St. Frideswide.

"And a pretty name that is to call a bran new church by," and Mrs. Strawless sneeringly mispronounced it.

Her husband reminded her that it was the name of the oldest square in Mulberry, where was the Bishop's office.

"Oh, then it'll be called St. Fridsit," said Mrs. Strawless, and she indulged in a triumphant and worldly laugh.

Stephen Bond was not a little vexed on hearing from Chetwon that Strawless had threatened to test his title to the Wanstone Croft in a court of law. "George, however, is quite quiet about it, and says that it is only a manœuvre of Strawless to bring down the price," wrote Peter. But Stephen was alarmed on the score of a similar law-suit being threatened against himself. Margreaves hung fire and would not decide, and Stephen was too honourable or too simple-minded to offer his land to another, after having promised it on fair market conditions to Margreaves, or, what is more likely, the gentle Stephen shrank with horror before the very mention of legal proceedings, as a timid man will shrink from the approach of a hungry hound.

The response of Mr. Fount to Strawless's telegram was to the effect that, for the immediate payment of £10,000 to the Lord Paramont, permission would be given to make a selection of land in security to the extent of two hundred acres in the north-west part of the forest, with a right to buy at an upset price at the end of five years if the loan was not then repaid, and which was to bear interest, *per annum*, not exceeding 3½ per cent., to be added on to the loan.

Fount had been somewhat tardy in this response to the telegram of Strawless, who had in the meantime been able to revise his own conduct in this important matter. He reflected that he had undertaken to act for the Bishop and the College; for aught that Strawless knew to the contrary, these very lands offered by Fount as security might belong to the College, and he might then "find himself in a pretty hole."

Strawless at once put himself in communication with Sir Potipher Popkin; and Sir Potipher wrote to Fount, saying that, on receipt of Lord Paramont's signature to a document enclosed, a cheque for £10,000 would be sent up.

But Lord Paramont abhorred nothing so much as signing his name on paper provided by other people. There was nothing he would not do rather than this, except, perhaps, go without new clothes and the finest wine in the world. And then it was that against his conscience—the goodness of his heart—for the worst of us have some of that commodity—and his personal knowledge of all the facts of the case, Paramont gave his consent to Fount to offer the lands of Stephen Bond, and the Wanston Croft in addition, as security for the £10,000. This he thought he had a right to do as being lord of those manor lands.

The intention of Fount in this case, of course, is obvious to the reader. By dealing with Strawless the matter would be kept strictly private—to open up relations with Sir Potipher Popkin, who was chairman of a powerful company, would be probably to place himself and Lord Paramont in great jeopardy, and most certainly in considerable trouble and liable for vast expenses—this was a matter in which legal formalities must be dispensed with. Again, Adrian Fount had no intention to defraud either Bond or Chetwon of their possessions—he believed that Paramont, being lord of those manors, had at least a prescriptive right over their disposal—but, above everything, in five years the £10,000 would be repaid; and, moreover, the present need for it was most pressing.

Fount did not answer Sir Potipher's letter but wrote direct to Strawless who, when he saw that the Wanstone Croft was actually to come into his own grip, went almost mad for joy, you could not see any joy on his face, he did not give way to the weakness of bounding into the air, or in any other way displaying the thrill of delight which swelled his expansive bosom. He simply rose from his chair, put on his hat, took a sovereign out of his pocket, tossed it up, put it back again, and straightway went and had an interview with the Manager of the Masmosque Bank of Mulberry.

That night a cheque for £10,000 was sent off to Adrian Fount by Michael Strawless.

"Who is this Fount?" said Sir Potipher Popkin several days after this, as he came puffing and blowing into Strawless's office, "He has never answered my communication."

"I was just coming over, Sir Potipher, to tell you that he writes to request me to make his apologies," said Strawless, who was great in *ex tempore* eloquence.

One of the most amusing things in Mulberry, was to watch the effect of titles on the men who had but lately received them. These new-branded knights did generous things, they became less credulous of other people's honesty, and they acquired a new form of hypocrisy which caused them infinite labour to practice ; they treated men not, as before, according to the men's desert, but after their own pompous notions of knightly honour and dignity ; at which sometimes no doubt the angels wept, but whether that was so or not, it is certain that a few men did not fail to laugh. There was a time when Sir Potipher would have severely catechised Strawless, but now he could not do so. He believed Strawless to be telling a lie, but it did not become him to confess his belief, or to act as if he knew what a lie was. And Strawless was one of the many cruel men in Mulberry who discovered this new-made habit of tenderness on the part of its titled men ; and he did not fail to turn it to his own uses.

The reply of Bursar Parlour to the Bishop of Mulberry was characteristic. No doubt, he said, £50,000 was a munificent sum, and he requested to know, how much of it was to be spent in stone, or stucco, and how much on the endowment. The College would not consent to all the money being spent on Architects and Builders, and, if the College were to give land for the church, and comply with the Bishop's suggestion about relinquishing manorial rights, in favour of a host of rich tradesmen, they must pay for it in some way. "Just then," Percy Parlour went on to say "a movement had been started at Oxford which would not fail to be of the greatest value to cotton-spinners and silk-people, and such as dealt in dyed wools. This movement was called

the endowment of research, the intention being to find out all the best students, who were poor in this world's goods, but rich in knowledge, and build for them a telescope, four hundred feet long, to be put up in St. Paul's, to find out how the stars were coloured, and the moon peopled; together with a vast burning glass, to be placed over Salisbury Plain, for the examination of germs, and monads, and molecules, and, if the rich men of Mulberry would subscribe towards this movement handsomely, they could be met, in a corresponding spirit, in the matter of land.

The Bishop was a little nettled, and sent for Strawless, who was immensely tickled by the Bursar's letter, and told the Bishop that there would be no doubt about Mulberry coming down handsome for the endowment of research. The Bishop was comforted, and wrote the Bursar an assuring letter, at the same time asking to be informed at greater length in this new matter of the endowment of research, and the erection of a telescope in St. Paul's. Did the Bursar really mean to say that it was in contemplation to pierce the dome of St. Paul's with a telescope? The Bishop would not undertake to give his mind to the consideration of the subject, until he was assured of the decision of the Chapter on a matter so novel and so altogether foreign to the ancient uses of our cathedral churches.

(To be continued.)





Oh, Kathleen is a Rare Colleen !

OH, Kathleen is a rare colleen !
The colour of her eye
Is of the blue that shall be seen
In summer sea and sky ;
Her skin is white as ocean spray,
Her voice it hath the tone
Of the waves singing far away ;
Her brow is beauty's throne ;
Her smile it is like light from heaven ;
And happy he, say I,
Happy the man to whom she's given :
He'll love her till he die !

Hiding her young face like a veil
Falls many a shining lock,
Far blacker than the ebon shale
Round which the sea-birds flock.
The fir-tree's form her form is like ;
But oh ! I cannot find
Fit words wherewith to finely strike
The beauty of her mind.
Methinks she was sent straight from heaven,
And happy he, say I,
Happy the man to whom she's given :
She'll love him till she die !

PHÆBUS.



THE HIBBERT LECTURES.

HE first course of these Lectures being completed, we may enquire what is likely to be their value in helping to answer the old question, "What is Truth?" This is only another way of enquiring how they are likely to serve the commonwealth. We are told that the "late Mr. Robert Hibbert established a trust-fund for the promotion of comprehensive learning and thorough research in relation to Religion, as it appears to the eye of the scholar and philosopher, and wholly apart from the interest of any particular Church or system." As a means of giving practical effect to the trust, public lectures were suggested to the trustees, in a memorial subscribed by personages of high literary and academical distinction. The burden of this memorial seems to be a complaint, that "traditional restraints in England have interfered with an unprejudiced treatment of the theory and history of religion," whilst a "rich literature has poured from the liberal schools of Germany and Holland." Such a complaint must be a lively surprise to many who are familiar with the mass of what may be called the iconoclastic literature of this country, from the middle of the eighteenth century until now, written in every conceivable vein and key—the loud blast of the *Age of Reason*, the cynical mockery of the *Anacalypsis*, the gentle spiriting of *Supernatural Religion* and *Philochristus*. Then, who does not know that the German literature in this, as in the department of metaphysic, is historically the development to ultimate conclusions, logically legitimate or not, of the antecedently-awakened speculative thought of this country. However, the suggestion of

the memorialists resulted in a course of lectures, by Professor Max Müller, on *The Origin and Growth of Religion*, delivered in the Chapter House at Westminster. From his eminence as a scholar, the popular interest in his writings, the geniality of his disposition, and generally hitherto the unaggressive tone in the statement of his hypotheses, probably no man more acceptable could have been chosen, nor one whose utterances carry greater weight with people of culture. On this very account there is imposed on those who ave a sense of the gravity of the issue, the imperious necessity to scrutinise with unusual care the logical value, and the practical outcome, of an argument which goes to the root of authority, of law, and of order for this life; not to speak of what may or may not be involved for another. The present social condition of Germany is a sort of practical commentary on the "advanced" teaching of German literature, which hardly disposes us to anticipate advantage to ourselves in the over-strenuous cultivation of the iconoclastic mood; and the advantage of the commonwealth must, after all, be the final test of what is true for men. We are permitted to think that there is an incontinence of intellect, a of passion, and that possibly modern thought may be advancing too fast, and for the nonce too far, with the risk of lunging into the region of chimaera.

It will be observed that Professor Max Müller does not choose for a subject the Origin of Religions, as of many, but with an eroic hardihood attacks the central problem itself, the Origin of Religion. After a preliminary, and unsuccessful, attempt to formulate a precise scientific definition of Religion in the abstract—unsuccessful, because the apprehension of the infinite manifestly does not at all include the higher idea of Religion, as the Way of Righteousness—the Professor proceeds to the discussion of his first division of the subject, the Perception of the Infinite. His argument is a masterpiece fine, firm reasoning, rising step by step to a climax of demonstration, that the perception of the Infinite is necessarily involved in the very perception of the finite. Accepting the promises of the positive philosophy, "sensuous knowledge, begining with sensuous perception, and con-

ceptual knowledge, consisting of collective and abstract concepts by the process of thinking," he demolishes its conclusions by showing how the finite senses, in the very effort to grasp the outlying expanse, come into perceptual contact with the Infinite, the ever unfathomable abyss of space and of time. So at the other end of the finite scale, we can neither perceive nor conceive an atom so small as to be devoid of weight and incapable of perpetual subdivision. In whatever direction we strain senses or thought, the intangible, the immeasurable, are perpetually beyond us. It is hardly too much to say that this discourse alone is worth the whole expenditure of the Hibbert Trust. But while we must pardon Mr. Max Müller, as the author of the hypothetical genesis of the "Aryans," for giving them the chief place over all other races in the development of the concept of the Infinite, we may still long for stricter definition and proof of those wonderful primaeval men ; and regret, at the same time, that the very work, in their behalf, of their champion has debarred him from acquiring an intimate knowledge of the Semitic mind, languages, and culture, which must have inevitably wrought a radical modification of his theories. Only think what might have happened, had the liable subjectivity of Professor Max Müller been originally bitten by archaic Chaldee, Syriac, Arabic, and the rest instead of Sanskrit ; how their all-pervading affinities—which now it is the foolish fashion to decry—would have illuminated the "science of language" ; how the Semites would have been glorified above all other men ; and the Aryans have been derived from the same stock, or more likely from an unevolved out of the limbo of the inner consciousness.

Language is the facile and all-powerful instrument with which he works ; and his marvellous natural aptitude for acquiring the mastery of the instrument, in its technical refinements, is in nothing more conspicuous than in his assimilation of our own tongue, literature, and intellectual mood. Our sympathy is at once seized by the charm of rhetorical, often epic, grace, and the finished elegance of idiom, which are the feature of his discourses no less than of his writings. We can hardly wonder at, conscious of

his power, he should sometimes yield to the temptation to "make points," which catch the applause of the herd.

In the second lecture he discusses with much refinement the question, "Is Fetishism a Primitive Form of Religion?" —the well-sustained conclusion being that it is a retrogression, a "decided corruption of an earlier and truer religion." The whole argument is a severe warning to evolutionists who, if it were possible for them to be logical, must have heard it in fear and trembling. "Retrogression has been as frequent among the races of mankind as progression." Again, "the savage, if progressive in everything else, may not have been so in religion." But we do not need the assistance of the lecturer, to teach us that the whole theory of progressive evolution breaks down under the crucial test of the actual conditions of savage life. As matter of fact the savage does not progress, but is in continual retrogression; and we have in language a positive measure of the extent of retrogression through long ages for widely-diffused races. Not to speak of American and Polynesian dialects, the reductions of several typical African languages, notably the Bornū or Kánuri, by Dr. Koelle—perhaps the greatest of living linguists, still spending his best energies as a missionary at Pera—have shown that the structure of these languages is in the highest degree complex and systematic, and the vocabulary extraordinarily copious. Mr. Max Müller himself says, that the "science of language has rectified the notions afloat as to the necessary inferiority of savage languages"; and he discards the "stories of tribes with languages like the twittering of birds." "No language has been found," he says, "into which it has not been possible to translate the Lord's Prayer." We remember also his controversy with Dr. Darwin on this question, in which the victory was certainly not with the physiologist. But if the hypothesis of progressive evolution fail, as it does fail, when applied to the development of language (which is the index of thought), it is manifestly not the hypothesis by which the history of man can be explained. And we already have the confession of so renowned an apostle of the doctrine as Professor Wyville Thompson that, in respect of the develop-

ment of higher out of lower organic forms, "the limit of specific identity is, in our experience, never overpassed." It is curious that Professor Max Müller, with the "eye of the scholar and philosopher," does not see the strict logical dilemma in which his implicit admissions involve the whole theory on which these discourses, as well as his writings, are based. If the hypothesis of evolution is to be accepted as a scientific dogma, it must be accepted with its full consequences; and it would seem absurd to exclude from its domain language, which is in itself the sum of human history, tradition, and culture, and the most palpable element of differentiation of man from the lower animals. If, on the other hand, it be not an established final truth—as confessedly it is not—it is to be lamented that the literature and teaching of the day should be saturated with a tincture of possible delusion. The powerful remonstrance addressed not long ago to Germany and scientific Europe, in this behalf, by Professor Virchow, whose freedom from "traditional restraints" and "prejudice" it is impossible to question, in his discourse *Der Freiheit des Wissenschafts im Modernen Staten*,* would seem to have been already lost in the echoes, like a cry in the wilderness.

Mr. Max Müller discards the crude notion of regular succession of Stone, Bronze, and Iron Ages. But he still cherishes his old error of supposing that men in what, for courtesy, may be termed the *unevolute* state may have used meteoric iron for the making of tools and weapons. Everybody ought to know, by this time, that meteoric iron cannot be forged for any serviceable purpose. On the other hand, of all metals, iron is precisely the easiest to reduce from the crude ore or oxides—as any metallurgist will tell you—and is, in one form or other, more widely diffused over the earth's surface than any other. Naturally, theory was a good deal the worse for the facts, when Commander Cameron came home and reported that throughout Central Africa he found iron in general use. The discovery, again, of the remains of the Egyptian iron-mines in the Peninsula of Sinai, has

* Now published in England. *The Freedom of Science in the Modern State.* Trübner.

demonstrated that the use of iron is at least as old as human history. What lies beyond this may still be food for speculation.

In the third division of his subject—The Ancient Literature of India, as material for the study of the origin of Religion—the lecturer is at home, and expounds with his wonted clearness the succession and nature of the four Vedas, the Mantras, the Brâhmanas, and the Sûtras ; and submits, without laying much stress on the chronology, that the age of the Rig-Veda may be from 2,000 to 3,000 B.C. It is, to say the least, a little strange that here, as in Egypt, in Assyria, in the Scripture record, or elsewhere, human history seems to run up to a dead wall at about 2,500 to 2,800 B.C.

In the succeeding discourse, on The Worship of the Tangible, Semi-Tangible and Intangible, he develops the expression of the Vedic hymns, as invocations to the salient features, the aspects, and the powers of nature. He seems to admit some allowance for the metaphorical anthropomorphism of poetic form ; but not enough, I conceive, even where invocation rises to prayer for deliverance from "guilt." Esoteric doctrine is one thing, and the exoteric expression of doctrine another. One may doubt if the lecturer's purely scholastic attitude admits of his rightly apprehending the one through the other. This is equivalent to doubting his aptitude as a philosopher for the analysis of so delicate a problem as the true doctrine, the religion, of the Vedic literature. It is to be remembered that the study of this literature is still in its infancy ; and though Professor Max Müller has achieved an immortal labour in opening up its rich stores—may the hand of time lie light upon him—it is too much to ask that we should accept, as final and absolute, the conclusions which he draws in the higher region of metaphysic, to which the problem of Religion belongs.

These conclusions must be held in reserve until they are checked by other thinkers at least equally competent, and who perhaps may not start with a preconception so crude, and logically futile, as that "virtually the theory of a primæval revelation is the same as that of the Ashanti

priest, who knows that his fetishes are gods because they tell him so." It is a great gain, nevertheless, to the world of thought to have the statement of any matter from standpoints the most divergent. It is questionable, for example, if the organized progression of Tangible, Semi-Tangible, Intangible, can be substantiated elsewhere than in the subjectivity of the evolutionist. *Dévala* is the derivative of *deva*, and must succeed it in thought, as in language ; and, by the lecturer's own showing, *Dyaus-pitar* (*Ζεὺς πατήρ*) is invoked in the earliest period of the Vedic hymns. Allowing the difference claimed between the divine father of Eastern Asia, and him whom Cyrus and Darius invoked, (*Ζεὺς πατρῷε, καὶ βασιλεὺς θεοί*) the grander attributes yet seem to gather round the god of the Rig-veda. Again, the Vedic "mother of all the gods" is Á-diti, the Boundless, the Infinite, and along with Dyaus "must have been common to the primæval Aryans before the separation of the Greek and Roman tribes." But the gods, we remember, are epicene ; Venus becomes bearded so, Á-diti is but the necessary complementary concept of Dyaus ; and, if the Aryans started "before the separation" with the notion of Infinite God, what becomes of the story of progressive evolution ? The historical evidence seems to demonstrate that the religion of the "Aryans," like that of most other people, slowly and systematically degenerated. It is the history of all religions, of the earliest as of the latest. To say nothing of the Shemitic Assyrians who began with Assur "King of the Gods of Heaven," and the All-Mother Ishtar, the Accadian Khammurabi ascribed his successes to the "favor of God and Bel;" whilst the — may we call them Khamitic?—Egyptians expressed the supernal power by Osiris, the "lord of all things," and Isis, "all that has been, is, and is to come." It is the fashion to overlook the significance of these historic parallels, but it is not becoming in "Science" to dandle the Veda like a new toy in the hands of a child. In whatever surmises or inferences we may indulge, there is not a shred of historical evidence to carry back the expression of the notion of the Infinite in the Veda, or the related Zend Avesta, earlier in time than the corresponding expression in other hierarchic centres, Assyria,

Egypt, China ; or—for that matter—in the Book of Job, which must have been in existence 2500 years before the Veda was committed to writing. As this did not occur until 1000 A.D. we may venture to be very sceptical, indeed, whether any book of the Veda—admitting the hypothetical chronology—escaped until that time variations of text, accretions of inserted gloss, *evolute* refinements of expression. It is possible to make too much of “internal evidence.”

We perceive the same conflict between facts and the theory of evolution as commonly formulated, when we advance with the lecturer to the discussion of the Ideas of Infinity and Law. “It has been said,” he remarks, “that if there be an idea to be looked for in vain among savage or primitive people, it is that of law.” Let us repeat what he says. It is worth repeating.

“The belief in a Kosmic order is older than the oldest Gâthâ of the Avesta and the oldest Vedic hymn. It is not the offspring of later speculation, but an intuition lying deeply rooted in the oldest religious consciousness of the Aryans, for the due appreciation of which it is far weightier than all the theories about the Dawn, Agni, Indra, and Rudra. Think only what it was to believe in a *Rita*, an order of the world, though it be no more at first than a belief that the sun will never overstep his bounds. It is all the difference between a Chaos and a Kosmos, between the blind play of chance and an intelligent, and therefore intelligible, Providence.”

When we arrive at the sixth discourse, on Henotheism, Polytheism, Monotheism, and Atheism, the lecturer breaks cover, and traverses the field of the faith of Christendom at a canter. He clears the “big ditch” at starting with a standing jump. The notion of a primæval, or any other, direct revelation is hopelessly antiquated, and, for the “science of religion,” not worth discussing. But before we can follow at that speed, we might hope for at least some theoretical allowance for the consideration of the questions—whether a direct divine revelation be in itself unreasonable in the abstract (which would cost science a good deal to prove); and, if not, whether the claim of the book commonly

called the Scripture to be the one specific revelation, be demonstrably historically false. There are men not a few, not inferior in science and culture to the lecturer himself, who will be ready to show that an affirmative answer to these questions is in the last degree illogical and untenable. Their position is not to be disproved merely by ignoring it. They will be entitled to say—Of the history of the Brahmanic and some other religions we are told a great deal, but of the origin of religion not a tittle; the problem is not even touched.

The lecturer finds in the Vedas what he describes as “a belief by turns in single supreme gods,” now one now another being addressed as supreme, but yet so that the supremacy of any one over the rest is not directly expressed. As this condition is hardly covered either by the terms Monotheism or Polytheism, he invents the new term Henotheism. But is this not (using a phrase of his own) a mere “jingle?” Many Supremes is a contradiction in terms and in thought; and we have a higher opinion of the “Aryans,” even than their sponsor, to suppose them so inconsequent. This convertibility of the currency of the gods, the attribution of the quality of Supreme to gods many, is common enough in all the mythologies, and can only be the exoteric form to express the esoteric notion of the One Supreme, who manifests himself to the hierophant now under one, now under another, salient aspect or attribute—each being for the vulgar herd a separate god. As we remembered that the gods are epicene, so here we remember the ancient canon that “all the gods are one.” There seems to be a suspicious element of subjectivity in this new “science of religion.” In physics, results are demonstrated, and there they stand. Even in philology, which is the border-land between the material and the immaterial, we arrive slowly at some well-defined conclusions which cease to be the subject of discussion. But it is manifestly hopeless to expect even this in the new science; which is not, indeed, and in the nature of the case, never can be, a science, or more than it ever has been—a department of speculative metaphysic. There is a science of Comparative Mythology, but that is quite a different thing.

The lecturer continues by a brilliant exposition of the sceptical reaction which, in the natural course of things, overtook the Vedic faithful. "They denied the *devas*, not because they believed or desired less, but more. There was a new conception working in the Aryan mind, and the cries of despair were the harbingers of a new birth." They longed for "a higher word, a purer thought." So we are led the whole journey, as it were, from the empyraean to gehenna and back again. Meanwhile, an eloquent peroration sets forth the presumptive uses of the atheistic mood, which echoed so strangely in the Chapter-house of Westminster, that the orator himself "knew perfectly well that what he had said would be misunderstood;" but added that he would be satisfied, if "but a few" understood what he meant by "honest atheism, and how it differs from vulgar atheism, or from dishonest theism." We have to remark only that these lectures are not addressed to the initiated "few," but to the popular many. The iconoclastic mood, as a transitive mood, is a fine mood; and if the lecturer had so tempered his phrase few could find fault. But no rhetorical coruscation will ever make the atheistic mood other than a bad disease; and there is nothing truer than the old canon, that it is the "fool that saith in his heart, there is no God." In the final discourse, however, on Philosophy and Religion, the Vedic poets recover themselves. "They built a new altar to the Unknown God." "They never doubted the reality or the unity of that of which Agni, Indra, Vāruna, &c. were but names." In the Upanishads, the latest stage of the Vedic literature, is discerned "the existence of the One, existing by itself, existing before all created things, existing so long before the gods that even they do not know whence it sprang." The lecturer's fine description of the ancient Brahman "forest-life," and its accompanying philosophic meditation, deserves attentive study. But for this machine-driven, work-a-day world, with no forest-life to which it is possible for weary men to retire, we must have rest for the heart while the head and hands go on working; and we turn once again to the Religion of Sorrow, which is the Religion of Consolation, for the certainties of this life,

and the probabilities, at least, of another to come. We should think him a cruel human father who should turn his children adrift without counsel, instruction, warning, for their journey of life; and may wonder that the philosophers do not apprehend the infinite cruelty and contradiction, involved in their predicate of a Divine Father who left his children to the cold nursing of Chronos. But, as certain of their own poets have said,—

Wer nie sein Brod mit Thränen ass,
Wer nie die kümmervollen Nächte
Auf seinem Bette weinend sass,
Der kennt Euch nicht ihr himmlischen Mächte.*

With a wide-embracing rhetorical charity, the lecturer finally asks, “When the deepest foundations of all the religions of the world have been laid free and restored, who knows but that those very foundations may serve once more like the catacombs, as a place of refuge for those who, to whatever creed or religion they belong, yearn for something better, purer, older, or truer than the statutable sacrifices, services, and sermons of the days in which their lot may be cast?” And, “Who knows but that in time the Crypt of the Past may become the Church of the Future?”

It is easy to be eloquent on such a theme; but not so easy to explain how a catacomb is ever to be anything else than a charnel-house, and sepulchre full of dead men’s bones.

W. J. COCKBURN MUIR.

POSTSCRIPT.—As all the gods, the manifold, yet homogeneous, manifestations of the Supreme, are one, so also manifold science, the definition of the systematic operations of the gods in nature, is one. (Whether you dispute the gods or not makes here no difference; and it is hardly worth while to discuss a question which has not yet—though it may—

* He who his bread in tears ne’er ate,
Who ne’er the sorrow-laden night
Upon his bed amoaning sate,
Kens nought of heav’nly aid and might.

come within the area of practical philosophy.) It is hard to conceive a wider difference, both of subject and of specific treatment, than that between discourses on the origin and nature of Religion by Professor M. Müller, and a discourse on abstract mathematical process by Mr. Spottiswoode. They are, as it were, at the opposite furthermost poles of the axis of the kosmos. Religion, the one thing that is thought of as incapable of precise definition, uncertain, unfixed, shadowy ; and Mathematics, the one thing to common apprehension whose certainty is irrefragable, absolute. Yet, after the manner of the hypothetical "two points at an infinite distance" through which "all circles pass," and the "lines drawn through one of these points" each of which "is perpendicular to itself," these two indefinitely distant poles are seen to coincide, and become henceforth a new differential centre from which to conduct the investigation of the kosmos. The recent address to the British Association by their president is, virtually, a scholium to be appended to the doctrine and demonstration of the perception of the Infinite, as set forth by Mr. Max Müller. The professor showed us how hypothetical primæval men, or men anywhere and "anywhen," instructed only by the elementary apprehensions of sense, perceived that the finite is edgeless, and, from these "mute beckonings," launched into the concept of the Infinite. Now, the master in "exact" science comes opportunely to tell us how the real, living, advanced men of this year of Grace, having got, as Carlyle says, "some hand-breadths deeper into the Deep that is infinite, without bottom, as without shore," have to confess that, while "so wide is the range of mathematical science, so indefinitely may it extend beyond our actual powers of manipulation, that at some moments we are inclined to fall down with even more than reverence before her majestic presence," yet "so strictly limited are her promises and powers, about so much that we might wish to know does she offer no information whatever, that at other moments we are fain to call her results but a vain thing, and to reject them as a stone when we had asked for bread." Again, when the mathematician —that is, be it remembered, the transcendental mathema-

tician—"sees around him those whose aspirations are so fair, whose impulses so strong, whose receptive faculties so sensitive, as to give objective reality to what is often but a reflex from themselves, or a projected image of their own experience, he will be willing to admit that there are influences which he cannot as yet either fathom or measure, but whose operation he must recognize among the facts of our existence."

Mr. Spottiswoode expounds, for the purpose of defending their use, three methods of speculative mathematics, three processes which are as like Mr. M. Müller's exposition of the rudimentary grasping of uninstructed men after the Infinite as can well be; allowing for the difference of scene and of epoch, and for what is exquisitely phrased by the President of the B.A. as "the modifications due to the chromatic dispersion of their individual minds." What we may call the transcendental calculus of imaginaries, the transcendental analysis of space of four dimensions, and the transcendental geometry of dimension which depends on position, with their kindred speculative processes, are nothing more nor less than artificial antennae and tentacles, to feel and lay hold of some more out of the infinite Unknown. Yet, not artificial;—for they are the natural and organic outgrowth of the Intelligence, which cannot help itself, but must continually expand towards the Infinite as long as it lives, whether for a few lustra or for ever. But if, by a process of transcendent imaginaries, we could conceive the Intelligence to have reached an end of that imperfect perpetual future tense which has no end, and to *have lived* for ever, the indefinite extension of its apprehension of the Infinite would have brought it no nearer to the comprehension of the Infinite than at the beginning.

But, after all, it may be shown—and here is another scholium—that there is a "particular case" in which the concept of the Infinite is, in fact, not necessarily a function in the equation of Religion; that in fact Religion, in purest form and quality, may conceivably be entirely independent of the notion of the Infinite. The expansion of the apprehension of the Infinite keeps pace with intellectual culture. But it

is matter of experience that the growth of intellectual culture does not necessarily "make for Righteousness." Hence, to arrive at an inclusive and, it may perhaps be, exhaustive definition of Religion, we should have to say, that it is the Search after Righteousness, and the Peace which follows upon Righteousness.

But, then, the "Science of Religion" would have to begin its demonstrations all over again, from wholly different premises.

W. J. C. M.





OLLA PODRIDA.

WHEN the allegorical artist of the coming age pictures Mars it will be well if he represent the God of War with a flaming sword in one hand and a geography book in the other. Certain it is that wars and rumours of wars tend to not only decrease the population and increase the income tax, but to extend our knowledge as well as our possession of the earth's surface. Personified in Lord Beaconsfield, the deity of battles has taught us a lot about classic Cyprus, and now he takes down for our edification and education the map of Afghanistan. Perhaps the next lesson will be the map of Russia.

But not only in this respect are we the gainers by the policy which is supposed to be the antithesis of "masterly inactivity." We obtain a knowledge of the manners (we were going to say laws, but refrain), and customs of the interesting Asiatic tribe with whom we are again it seems to be brought into conflict. We have hitherto conveniently generalised all the independent Indian princes and their people as savages, just about one remove from cannibals. But we owe it to an enterprising penny print, that they are this and something more. Ever to the fore, whether it be anent a monstrous gooseberry or a prodigious sea-serpent, the *Telegraph* has discovered that the savage Afghans have cultivated the fine arts, that they have a literature, and more, that they are born poets and nurse the muses.

We are not told whether the Special Commissioner of the *Telegraph*, like another Stanley and another Livingstone, said upon meeting a stray Afghan in Fleet Street, "A Poet, I presume?" receiving a reply in the affirmative, or not; but one thing is sure, and that is, that the Laureate of Cabul has been interviewed and hath discoursed in cadence soft and sweet as follows :—

O rose, who art the true cause of the garden's loveliness,
Why condescendest thou to join in laughter with thorns
and weeds?

How cometh it that thou are not conscious of thine
own dignity?

For thou art the one and only beauteous object of the
parterre.

The songs of the nightingale will not always be made
for thee,

For thou, O lovely rose! art notorious for thy lack of
constancy.

The *Tele* feelingly asserts "it is no ordinary people that make such a strain as this popular amongst themselves," and if it were asked, we doubt not it would add that for imagery, pathos, rhyme and metre it runs a close race with Macdermot's "We don't want to fight, but by jingo, &c." Fancy the Afghan's song on a barrel-organ.

Stimulated by what it thought the *Telegraph*'s marvellous enterprise, the *Daily News* also dispatched a Special Commissioner to Afghanistan *via* Fleet Street to interview the Poet. The judicious bribe of "half-a-quartern and two out," won the confidence of the inspired savage, and the explanation followed that in the original Afghanistanie the poem was as follows :—

O *Telegraph* who art the true cause of all typographical
ugliness.

Why condescendest thou to put so much ink upon thy
largest circulation?

How comest it that thou art not conscious of the extra
expense it must be to thee?

For thou art not half so pretty as thy pink faced
contemporary the *Globe*!

The pence of the people will not always be coined for
thee,

For thou, O inky *Tele*! art notorious for thy lack of
consistency.

The *Daily News* would like this last to go on the barrel-
organ, please.

Miss *Fanny* Power Cobbe is a contributor to the *St. James's Magazine*. Miss *Frances* Power Cobbe writes to the papers to say that Miss Fanny is a different person to Miss Frances! Now Miss Fanny should write to the papers to say she is a different person, quite, from Miss Frances. *Then* perhaps with a little *further* explanation, the distinction would be obvious, and the British Public would not be in danger of mistaking an imaginary Miss Brown for a hypothetical Miss Jones.

Mr. G. H. Whalley M.P., died Monday, 7th October. The *Shrewsbury Journal* however would not believe it, and in its issue of Wednesday the 9th, stated—"his medical advisers now have hopes of his ultimate recovery." More Jesuitism!

Light's light is diminishing. It used to be sixpence, now it only gives threepenn'orth. Before *Light* is altogether extinguished we believe it is to be reduced to a farthing, and then re-christened the *Rushlight*. After that will come the deluge and all will be darkness.



St. James's Magazine.

DECEMBER, 1878.

NEW YEAR HOPES

BY F. VON ARMFELT,

Author of "Frank Arnstein," "Sketches in France," &c., &c.

SHORT days, early nights and late mornings,
And glimpses most rare of the sun,
Are all unmistakable warnings
That the course of the year is nigh run.
The knell of the old year is sounding ;
"Seventy-eight" to the grave doth incline ;
And each of us fresh hopes is founding
On "Seventy-nine."

We'll hope that old Nick won't be busy
In heating political blood ;
That Gladstone won't throw stones at Dizzy,
Nor Dizzy at Gladstone fling mud ;
That the Lion of Jingo will mildly
Lie down with the Liberal Lamb ;
That Radicals won't deal so wildly
In humbug and flam !

That railway and steamboat collisions,
Won't be "quite too awfully rife ;"
That C. won't upset P.'s decisions ;
That L*nsd*I* will stick to his wife.
That Shere Ali won't make a riot,
And he and the "Figure Divine"
Will find out 'twere best to be quiet
In "Seventy-nine."

We'll hope that the faces so killing,
 We gaze on each day in the Park,
 No more will be sold for a shilling
 To peer, costermonger, and clerk.
 That decency, modesty, duty,
 Will triumph o'er passion for pelf;
 For she who would thus sell her beauty
 Would soon sell herself.

That wives will a new leaf turn over,
 Nor join in the Cyprian dance,
 With an actor or guardsman for lover,
 To Venice, or Brussels, or France.
 That Lawson will drown his old hobby
 In bumpers of Burgundy wine,
 And get "run in," screwed, by a Bobby,
 In "'Seventy-nine."

We'll hope that our legal protectors,
 The Judges,—“a terrible show,”—
 Will just hang a few Bank directors,
 A hint to the others, you know!
 That Orton will shut up his braying,
 When he finds it is really no use;
 And parsons go in more for praying,
 And less for abuse.

Good-bye, then, Old Year, since we're parting !
 You've been but a sorry old friend ;
 But as things have been at the starting,
 So will they remain to the end.
 Good-bye ! but I won't quite forget you,
 And, *malgré* these “hopings” of mine,
 Perhaps I may some day regret you
 In “'Seventy-nine.”





CHRISTMAS WITH MY AUNT.

By W. J. MORGAN,

Author of "A Trap for a Young Bride," "From West to East," &c.

WHEN I was a young man I went to pay a Christmas visit to my Aunt Dorothea, an eccentric old maiden lady who resided in the then fashionable neighbourhood of Bloomsbury. There was a feud of long-standing between her and my family, so that until I came to town I never set eyes upon her; but having heard that she was uncommonly wealthy, and being myself in extremely straightened circumstances, I thought it might be worth my while to introduce myself to her notice.

I dressed myself in my best for the occasion, being naturally desirous to make the best possible impression upon her. I wore a blue cut-away coat, with brass buttons, and a high velvet collar; a handsome satin waistcoat, richly ornamented with embroidery work; and a pair of drab high-lows which fitted me like a glove. Add to this a rich silk stock, embellished with a gold brooch; a real beaver hat with a very curly brim, and hessian boots of the latest fashion, and you may picture to yourself that, being young and comely, I made a very respectable appearance.

My aunt received me most graciously, and, when I had explained who I was, recognised me at once. She was a strange looking old lady with very sharp features, and an enormous hook nose, which at once caused me to notice a striking resemblance between her and the favourite parrot

at her elbow, which regarded me solemnly with its head on one side, just as my aunt did. Her attire was old-fashioned and eccentric, and she wore a stiff mob cap, which, being perched awry upon her head, imparted a reckless and jovial expression to her old wrinkled face.

I was not much troubled with shyness, and at once began to rattle away to the old lady in that cheery light-hearted way which I had when I was young. I soon discovered that my aunt was not impartial to a bit of scandal, and proceeded to regale her with the latest *on dits* and anecdotes of London society. She listened to my conversation with evident pleasure, and encouraged by the success of my efforts, I was proceeding in my most lively vein, when the old lady said, suddenly—

“I’m a cockatoo !”

The announcement was so abrupt and startling, that I could scarcely believe my ears. I stared in speechless wonder at my aunt, who sat simpering as though she had imparted an interesting piece of information, until I began to imagine that I had misunderstood her.

“I beg your pardon,” I said, respectfully; “you observed that you were—”

“A cockatoo !” repeated my aunt, promptly, and as though to emphasise the assertion, proceeded to favour me with a remarkably correct imitation of the sharp, shrill notes of the bird in question.

I was now fairly taken aback, and began to feel a little awkward. My aunt appeared to enjoy my discomfiture, and continued to smile upon me with a placid and benign expression of countenance, while I sat wondering whether I was expected to offer my congratulations, or to treat the remark as a mere common-place. In the midst of my uncertainty the door opened behind me, and a man’s voice growled—

“What is the matter now ?”

“I’m a cockatoo,” said my aunt, cheerfully.

“No you ain’t ; no you ain’t,” said the voice, decidedly.

The new comer was an elderly man of forty, with a surly face and manner ; attired in dingy black, and evidently a

servant out of livery. He took his place sullenly behind my aunt's chair, and regarded me with suspicious glances.

"I am a cockatoo; you know I am" asseverated my aunt, rather faintly.

"No you ain't," snapped the man.

My aunt feebly protested that she was, but was evidently oowed by the contradiction, and became slightly hysterical. She shortly recovered herself, however, and proceeded to put me various questions about my family, which shewed that when she chose she could talk sensibly enough.

After a brief conversation my spirits revived again, and impelled by the notion that she had taken a fancy to me, I ventured to invite myself to dinner. My coolness fairly startled the old lady, and from the troubled expression on her face, I thought she was going to say she was a cockatoo again. I believe, indeed, that the assertion was already on the tip of her tongue, when the surly man gave her a nudge and silenced her.

"Do you hear, John," said my aunt, after a pause, turning to her attendant; "my nephew says he will stop to dinner."

"I hear," said John, more sulkily than before.

"Well?" interrogated my aunt, anxiously.

"Let him," growled the man.

My aunt appeared immensely relieved, and insisted on shaking hands with me. Her manner was really quite cordial, and I began to congratulate myself on the progress I had made. She informed me that dinner would be served in half-an-hour, and bade John to conduct me to a room where I could wash my hands. As the man advanced towards the door, the old lady seized me eagerly by the arm, and was on the point of again informing me that she was a cockatoo; but being detected in the act, put her fingers to her lips to enjoin secrecy, and looked foolish.

John preceded me up the old oak staircase, and ushered me into a gloomy apartment overhead without a word. After pulling up the blind, and darting another angry glance at me, he silently withdrew; but, as he closed the door, I called after him.

"Hi! old squaretoes! Come back!"

"What?" he enquired, putting his head into the room.

"Is there anything wrong, anything the matter, with my aunt?" I enquired.

"No!" he replied, shortly.

"Sure she is not a little touched here?" I suggested, pointing to my forehead.

"Quite sure!"

"I'm glad to hear it. Look ye here, John, you sly dog!" I said cheerfully, "you know the bin where the old Madeira is kept, I'll wager. Suppose we have a bottle for dinner!"

"Suppose you don't?"

"I think we shall, if you haven't drunk it all yourself," I said knowingly producing a half-crown. "Here's a little present for you, John. Perhaps this may sharpen your faculties."

I poked him slyly in the ribs as I dropped the coin into his hand, and was gratified to perceive the ghost of a twinkle in his cunning eyes as he vanished from the room. When I descended into the parlour I found the table already spread, and my aunt seated at the head of it. John stood like a gloomy statue behind her chair, and on my arrival at once removed the covers.

The repast was rather frugal than otherwise, but I was too much occupied in watching the extraordinary behaviour of my aunt to pay much attention to what was set before me. The parrot was drawn up close beside her, and received the choicest morsels from her plate, and she continually addressed it in a cheery, confidential manner throughout the meal. She even appeared unconsciously to imitate its movements, for when she raised her wine glass to her lips I noticed that she took small sips, and then threw her head back, like a bird. John, in the meanwhile, paid us just as much attention in the way of waiting as suited him, and kept a watchful eye on my aunt, whom he frequently admonished by nudging with his elbow. My aunt seemed once or twice inclined to resent his interference, but she was evidently too much afraid of him to rebel. For my part, I had taken a strong dislike to the man, and mis-

trusted his powerful influence over my aunt. Moreover, his manner towards me was extremely disrespectful and annoying, and I resolved to rebuke him on the earliest opportunity.

When the man had left the room for an instant (to fetch the Madeira, I hoped, for hitherto I had been forced to content myself with small beer) I ventured to advert to his disrespectful conduct, and expressed my surprise that my aunt should put up with it.

"My dear aunt, you should not allow him to tyrannise over you," I concluded indignantly. "A servant, however old and faithful, ought never to forget his place, and I counsel you to get rid of him as quickly as possible."

"I'm a cockatoo!" said my aunt, rather inopportune.

"No doubt, my dear aunt," I said gently; "but at the same time——"

"I'm a cockatoo! I'm a cockatoo!" she repeated, staring with an expression of extreme dismay over my shoulder.

Turning round, I perceived that my aunt's uneasiness was caused by the presence of the man himself, who stood in the doorway, listening to the conversation. I resolved to give him a piece of my mind at once, and strike while the iron was hot.

"How dare you, sirrah!" I cried in my grandest manner. "You have been listening to my conversation with your mistress! Did you hear what I said about you?"

"Every word," he said, grimly.

"Then I hope you will mend your ways and be more civil in future," I retorted; a little staggered, nevertheless, by the man's coolness. "I am this lady's nearest relative, and intend to protect her from further insults. She is an old lady——"

"I'm a cockatoo!" interrupted my aunt, in agitated tones.

"——, and you evidently take advantage of her helpless position," I continued. "Henceforth you will be pleased to treat her with proper respect, or I'll know the reason why."

I flattered myself that my indignation was calculated to overawe and subdue the man, but to my unspeakable

astonishment, a broad grin overspread his ill-favoured countenance, and he advanced towards me with an air of calm superiority.

"You are a gay young spark, my lad," he said, with his thumbs in the armholes of his waistcoat, "but you crow too loud for my liking. We ain't likely to get along together, you and me, so perhaps you'll clear out of this establishment."

"Sir!" I exclaimed, bounding from my chair in a fury—

"I'm a cockatoo! I'm a cockatoo!" screamed my aunt, in a state of nervous excitement.

"Never mind that," said the man, roughly; "why don't you tell him what *I* am?"

"I know you are an insolent scoundrel, and that is quite enough for me," I cried, beside myself with rage and indignation; "I shall pitch you out of the window!"

I was a hot-blooded youth in those days, and strong and active as a tiger. Without a moment's hesitation I caught the man round the waist, and would surely have put my threat into execution, had not my aunt flung herself upon me and seized my coat-tails. She uttered such shrieks that I was startled, and suffered the fellow to struggle from my grasp.

"You villain!" he cried, foaming with rage and panting for breath. "I believe you would be committing murder."

"Murder! Thieves! Fire!" screamed my aunt. "I'm a cockatoo! I'm a cockatoo!"

"You are not," contradicted my adversary; "you are my lawful wife, and you know it. Why don't you say so?"

"I am your wife," echoed my aunt. "I am your wife. I'm a cockatoo!"

"His what? His wife!" I repeated, astounded.

"Five years next Tuesday week," replied my aunt, sobbing.

"Five years come next Toosday week," asseverated the man.

It is needless to state that I vehemently and indignantly declined to believe the truth of this assertion, and the result was that the watchman was called in and I was forcibly

and ignominiously expelled from the house. This was my first and last visit to my aunt, for it transpired that she had actually married her butler some years before. The marriage had been kept secret, and the fellow continued to officiate in his original capacity on the rare occasions when visitors came to the house. I charitably endeavoured to get my aunt shut up in a lunatic asylum after this, but my laudable efforts were frustrated by the difficulty of proving that her mind was unsound at the time she contracted her unfortunate alliance; and the consequence was that I never inherited a farthing of her fortune, nor did my outraged uncle ever forgive me for visiting my aunt that Christmas.





THE RECTOR.

BY R. A. LEA,

Author of "Faithful or Faithless?" "Veronica's Home," &c.

CHAPTER I.

YES! he was handsome, tall, well-made, and decidedly a fine man. I was obliged to own it, sitting in my pew in church, on the last day of the old year, critically studying our new Rector, as he read the prayers in a deep, powerful voice, for the prayers were read, not intoned. The parish had been in a great state of excitement as to the possible changes a young and energetic man might make in our time-honoured, old-fashioned service.

I was alone, my mother being too delicate to venture out in the winter, and although I listened to the Rector's voice, my thoughts wandered to the olden days, that seemed so far off, yet it was but a few short months since my dear father's death, when we left London and the luxury of wealth, to economise in Rosedale, and try and live upon little more than the fortune my mother was wont to spend upon dress.

The Rector in the pulpit, I noticed with pleasure, he had no written sermon; he seemed earnest, and slightly pompous, alike large in manner and person. Owing to his north-country speech, his pronunciation of some few words was peculiar.

Watching the firm mouth, noting the straight thick eyebrows, my verdict was uncompromising, ambitious, and aggressive. How came he in the Church? Church militant

should be for this man, armed at all points; and so I sat speculating, until my attention was arrested, and I thought more of what he was saying than of what he was.

The service over, I hastened home.

"How do you like the new Rector?" was my mother's first question.

"He is very handsome," I replied unhesitatingly, "a kind of Pope Hildebrand, sure to be spoiled by the worship of all these silly geese; he's not the sort to be snapped up, as that poor simple curate was who married Miss Bounce, because he hadn't the pluck to say No, when she proposed. Mr. Armstrong would have said No, very decidedly."

"How you rattle on, Alice, dear! Do you think he will call? I do so dread seeing strangers."

"Never fear, mother mine, he'll only call on the big-wigs. Your widow's mite won't buy so much as a brick for his new steeple! He won't trouble us."

"Does he preach well, and was the church full?"

"Crowded, and blind hero-worship written on every upturned woman's face of the congregation, as they reverentially listened to the oracle. I must allow that he preaches well, and has a magnificent voice."

"You must allow," my mother repeated; "dear child, ah, me, youth is very hard and uncompromising."

"Don't say that, mother mine."

"Yes, dear, because Mr. Armstrong happens to be good-looking, well-off, a bachelor, and all the young ladies in Rosedale are ready to fall in love with him, you are most unreasonably prejudiced against him."

"Oh! dear, no, only I am sick of the praises of our clerical Phœnix!"

I left Mamsie placidly knitting, her arm-chair drawn near the fire, yet not too far from the window but that the wintry sunbeams might cover her with a pale glory. Throwing off my bonnet, I wrapped a shawl around me and went into the garden to gather the few flowers still in bloom. A bunch of Christmas roses in my hand, and singing "'Tis the last Rose of Winter," burst into the room to start back in dismay, seeing a gentleman sitting near my

mother. He rose, and, bowing, held out his hand. It was the Rector!

What with the surprise and the cold air, I blushed.

"Miss Fortescue, I presume. I was explaining to your mother that I have a claim upon your friendship—your father and mine were at Cambridge together; you see, we ought to be friends."

He held my hand in his, and the neat little preface gave me time to recover my composure, the more that mother added—

"'Tis most kind of Mr. Armstrong to call. I am a sad invalid, and can see very few people—friends we have none, for we are new-comers, and almost strangers in your parish."

"How dull you must find a suburb after London. Half town, half country, like a Liberal Conservative, meaning neither one thing nor the other. I was hoping that Miss Fortescue would help me in my new duties, by giving me the *carte du pays*, and some slight knowledge of my parishioners."

"Indeed, no!" I hastily replied, "I know no one. I hope you won't wish to make me useful. I hate district visiting, and schools and—"

"Alice!" Mamsie interrupted in a warning voice.

"Too ornamental to be useful," Mr. Armstrong remarked, a laugh ill-covering the sneer.

I hated him, and must have turned white with indignation, and the more that I had brought it upon myself.

"Mrs. Wade, the curate's wife, will gladly tell you all, and more than you require: she is a walking chronicle of the small sayings and doings of Rosedale."

I turned away and busied myself with the flowers.

"Did you help with the church decorations?" he enquired, with an admiring glance at my winter nosegay.

"No! I have no taste, no call, I mean for that sort of thing. Shall I ring for tea, mother?"

"Do, dear, and perhaps Mr. Armstrong will take some."

Tea was brought, and I poured out and handed the tea and toast, and meekly waited upon the Rector, while he

chatted pleasantly with my mother, not again looking at or addressing me, except to ask for more sugar.

I felt grateful for his ready kindness to her, but could not forgive him on my own account.

He left, promising to call again. Mamsie had enjoyed the change; she missed more than she allowed—the pleasant circle of genial friends, the sparkling conversation of the clever talkers who gathered round us and formed our London coterie.

CHAPTER II.

THE Rector kept his word, and often dropped in to see us. When the twilight shadows were deepening, and mother and I were idly sitting over the fire, we heard his ring and well-known step, and although I was frequently prickly and disagreeable, insensibly I felt drawn to him, and at times was dimly conscious that the sympathy of friendship was ripening into a warmer feeling.

This pleasant life lasted until my cousin, Lady Everest, a young widow, came to stay with us. Fascinating and lovely, delicate and graceful, with an exceedingly small figure, she was a diamond edition of beauty. She dressed well and fashionably, and, where Nature failed, unscrupulously called Art to her assistance. Her creed was to make the best of everything and everybody.

La blonde Blanche was a dangerous flirt. She voted Rosedale dull, and not a decent man in the place, until Sunday, when she accompanied me to church.

"How deliciously grand-looking the parson is," was her flippant observation. "Pity he's not in the cavalry. What a swell he'd be on horseback! Does he ride?"

"He does," I said curtly.

"Does he visit Auntie?"

"He does," I remarked again.

"Oh!"

Blanche was silent during the remainder of the walk, probably organizing plans for the coming assault.

The campaign was short and successful. Blanche Everest was perfectly bewitching, nor could John Armstrong imagine her to be a frivolous, heartless flirt. She sat at his feet—morally and physically—flouncing down on a low stool, like a baby of five, and tossing back her glittering mane ("heavy golden tresses" he called them), looked up, oh! so earnestly, into his truthful eyes, and implored him to help her—make her better. What books should she read? How could she help in the parish—teach in the schools, visit the poor old bedridden women—anything to help her neighbour, and, in so doing, help herself to a more useful, broader, more beautiful life? She was heartily weary of the round of empty frivolity and worldly gaiety, &c., &c.

Mr. Armstrong fell into the snare, and set to work in earnest to convert my fair and dangerous little cousin.

At last, Lady Everest's visit came to an end, and I consented to go with her to London for a few days.

My mother wished me to have change, and I, too, longed to be away.

CHAPTER III.

LADY EVEREST'S house in town was a tiny, old-fashioned one, opposite Kensington Gardens, and the broad walk bordered by magnificent elms.

The drawing-room, hung with pale blue satin, was furnished with low couches and lounging chairs of Amboyna wood and gold; a wealth of knick-knacks recalled the memories of her frequent sojournings abroad, and in every available nook and corner flowering shrubs were placed, and the air was fragrant with the scent of hothouse flowers.

One afternoon, Blanche was lounging lazily on a couch, reading a French novel; I plunged in the double enjoyment of a new poem and an easy chair, when the Reverend Mr. Armstrong was announced.

"Gracious! the Bishop," Blanche exclaimed. That being the preferment she had bestowed upon him in our confidential talks. Quietly slipping the French book under the sofa cushion, she gracefully rose to welcome him.

I started to my feet. I saw his lip curl, as looking around he said—"What a fairy palace you inhabit, Lady Everest. Such a contrast to my den, or to your cosy fire-side," he added, turning to me. "Quite a Castle of Indolence! and how many mirrors—one, two—"

"Don't trouble yourself," Blanche interrupted; "there are only six in this room. I like to see pretty things around me, and that is why I like to look into my mirrors—*comprenez vous?*."

Her smile broke into a ringing laugh at his mystified expression.

"Don't look so black and cross, please; I'd no idea you were in town. When did you come?"

"Yesterday. Only for a few days."

While I was asking about my mother, Blanche consulted her engagement-book, and exclaimed, in an imperative voice—

"You must dine with me on Monday. Don't say no; I'll never forgive you. You see I'm a backslider since leaving dear Rosedale, and you find me wallowing in luxury; but I can't become a reformed character all at once."

She looked irresistibly pretty, and, of course, he accepted; indeed, he seemed rather to enjoy the comfortable luxury, and stayed until the clock struck seven, when he started up with an apology for his visitation.

"At what hour do you dine on Monday?" he asked.

"Eight o'clock," my cousin replied.

"London hours!" he ejaculated, as he left; whereupon Blanche indulged in a prolonged series of yawns.

"Fortunately we don't dine out to-night; pastoral visits are nice; but one may have too much of a good thing. Mind, Alice, on Monday, we shall have a severe dinner, and make the most of having the cloth. I'll throw in some heavies, and prune the rich fancy running riot in this room, and the boudoir."

"What an arch-flirt you are, dear. Would you marry him?" I asked anxiously.

With a merry laugh, she echoed—

"Marry him! I should be like *un diable dans un ténitier*. Fancy me cutting out flannel petticoats, making shirts, and presiding gracefully over a soup kitchen. I could never do Goody!"

"Then why don't you tell him so?"

"Don't you scald your pretty fingers in my kail." And Blanche left to dress for dinner.

On Monday I was struck with the change in the rooms.

"Chaste and elegant," Blanche said, answering my astonished look.

"So you are, dear," I wilfully remarked.

Blanche looked charming in black velvet and lace; bright diamonds glittering in her golden hair.

The room had undergone a change as if by magic. The artistic litter of pretty, untidy things had vanished; the yellow paper-covered French novels had given place to Dorè's "Dante" and "Gems of Art;" pure white camellias filled the vases, and the exuberant light and colouring was judiciously toned down and lowered.

She must love him, I reflected; when Blanche remarked—

"Mind, the Reverend takes you down to dinner; and don't let him absorb me afterwards; I have something else in view. You sit near Captain Lennox."

What a sphinx she was!

"Don't set me the herculean task of retaining and amusing your admirers," I bitterly retorted.

"You ought to be grateful, Alice. I believe you like him yourself. Pin up this curl for me, there's a dear; Félicie has no taste."

I did so in silence, Blanche rattling on the while.

"I bet the Parson comes first—oh! don't let me forget to ask him to say grace. It's rather nice having one's chaplain, isn't it?"

Before I could answer her senseless chatter, Lord Maybury was announced; other guests followed quickly. Mr. Armstrong was the last to arrive. Together we went

in to dinner. He talked pleasantly, but his thoughts were not with me ; he watched every movement, every word, of Blanche, and all my efforts at small talk hung fire.

I was angry with him for not seeing how unworthy she was, as she sat in the insolence of her beauty, flirting with the old Peer, whose arm she had taken (and whose hand, *on dit*, she might have had), and the handsome young Count di Spina, who sat on her left, and to whom she had assigned a colourless girl of sweet sixteen, too shy to talk any language but her own, and very little of that ; still my lady rattled on in fluent, if not in choice Italian. My heart ached for John Armstrong. The dinner over, and once more in the drawing-room, I was mindful of my cousin's injunction, and did my best to attract him, but in vain, until I bethought me of the photograph album. We turned over one, dedicated solely to Blanche—her Book of Beauty. In it, she appeared in every variety of attitude and costume. John silently passed them over, until I pointed to a lovely vignette, recalling one of Greuze's sweet heads. His face softened as he gazed fixedly at it. How I longed to be beautiful !

" Do sing me an Irish ballad," Lord Maybury was saying, while the Count begged for a Neapolitan canzonetta.

On her way to the piano, Blanche bent towards Mr. Armstrong, and I heard her say in a low voice—" It shall be your favourite, 'I'm Wearin' Awa', Jean.' " The sad words floated on the air, filling the hushed silence with their plaintive sorrow. Tears rose to my eyes as I listened to the silvery voice dying away in a low mournful wail. Suddenly the singer dashed into the brilliant bravura, "*Una voce poco fa*," the bird-like voice revelling in the *fiorituri* and *roulader* of Rossini's masterpiece. All were loud in their praises and thanks when Blanche left the piano, and so the weary evening passed away.

CHAPTER IV.

EARLY next morning I was roused from an unrefreshing sleep by a telegram recalling me to Rosedale.

My mother was worse, and the doctors assured me her

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only chance of life was in leaving England at once for the South. They sent her away to die. I pass over the months of wearing anxiety until I was left alone, and almost penniless in a strange land. I sought for and obtained a situation as governess. We travelled constantly from place to place, and I heard only at rare intervals from my cousin Blanche. Sorrow had softened me ; and, more charitable than in the days of my uncompromising youth, I found myself clinging to my only relative, and acknowledging the fascination of her quick wit and kindly nature. Two years had passed, when I received a letter from my solicitor, containing the news that a small sum of money had been left me by an unknown uncle (the scapegrace of the family), a brother of my father's. The fortune was not much, but to me it was everything—*independence*. As the glorious idea flashed upon me, I determined forthwith to start for England, and wrote to Blanche, asking her to engage rooms for me in Victoria Street. Oh ! to be once more in England, to meet the old friends once more. My day-dreams were full of my new life, how I should gratify my taste in furnishing my nest with comfortable old-fashioned furniture and hangings in *les couleurs dégradées*, olives and sage greens.

On my arrival I was affectionately greeted by my charming cousin, and obliged to promise to stay with her while the flat was being made ready. Blanche herself looked not a day older. No care had ruffled the smooth surface of her life's calm sea, but the drawing-room struck me as a shade less gorgeous than of yore. Its summer dress of chintz and lace curtains looked airy and cool ; from the open windows the fragrant scent of mignonette came, and the light was agreeably tempered by a sunshade. Coming in from the afternoon glare and the dust, the lounging chair into which I sank seemed a very haven of rest.

“ Don't you find me changed, dear ? ” Blanche enquired.

“ Not at all,” I replied ; “ just the same.”

“ Not altered for the better ? ” This in a very demure tone.

“ Let me have a good look ; perhaps you are a trifle more matronly and severe.”

I noticed that the fluffy light hair was banded smoothly from the low forehead, and twisted simply in a great knot.

"Ah!" my cousin said, with a sigh, stroking the folds of her rich grey silk gown, "and, my dress, dear, quite Quaker-like simplicity."

"Well done simplicity," I quoted, adding, "What have you done with your frisettes and your curls and your plaits, and your, your—you know? What does it all mean?"

"That I am going into the Church!"

"Nonsense. You, a Sister of Mercy?"

"Mercy—No! La, dear, I'm going to be married."

"Married, and to whom?"

"To the Bishop."

"Colonial?" I asked, much relieved.

"Why, Alice, don't you remember Brother Armstrong? I used to call him the Bishop. He's the Dean of St. Arne. I always knew he'd succeed."

All the blood left my cheeks; I felt faint.

"What a fool I am," she muttered.

I broke down, and after a violent fit of tears, I kissed Blanche, and without a word went off to my room to be alone with my misery.

CHAPTER V.

BLANCHE delicately contrived I should not meet John. She did not ask him to dinner, and I managed to be out when he paid his regular visit.

"Once a week, dear, you know, I take him in!" she laughingly remarked to me. "I couldn't stand it oftener; it would interfere with my daily duties."

The most important of these consisted in practising for a concert to be given by the Duchess of Ardmore, in aid of the funds of the Women's Rights and Wrongs Co-operative Association, Unlimited! I quote Blanche. She was to sing a duet with her old admirer, the Count di Spina, and a solo. From early dawn to dewy eve she practised. As the event-

ful day approached, Blanche became more absorbed, going off to the last rehearsal in great excitement. On her return she found me ready to start (John was expected). Eagerly shewing me the programme, she exclaimed—

“Aren’t they sweet?” They were embellished with portraits of the performers. “Isn’t it a good idea, photographs?”

I gazed in astonishment at the cards.

“Tickets one guinea each, and at St. Mary’s Hall! Why, it’s a public concert! And your portrait, dear Blanche, and looking like a French actress. Oh, don’t let them have your portrait!”

“Don’t be ridiculous, Alice; you are so *collet monté*.”

“Does Mr. Armstrong know it?” I gasped; the old familiar name coming to my lips.

“Yes—no—I am not sure if I told him.”

“Doesn’t he object?”

“I should hope not.”

Hastily throwing down the programme, she turned to leave the room, pausing to look at herself in the glass.

“I must take off this delicious bonnet. John can’t bear it. He’s no taste. Isn’t it becoming!”

CHAPTER VI.

ON my return Blanche called me to her room.

“Such a scene,” she began. “I hate men. John positively forbids my singing to-morrow. Isn’t it a shame—puritanical nonsense, to which he expects me to knock under.”

“I am so sorry,” I gently said, when she paused to take breath.

“Sorry! What for? For him, perhaps? You don’t suppose I’m going to give in and give up, and disappoint every one, and myself most? My word is given, my dress is ordered, and I shall sing.”

"What will John do?"

"What he evidently wishes—break off the engagement. I believe it's a flimsy pretext. He has long been thinking of it."

"You are angry and unjust," I said indignantly.

"Of course you stand up for him. Tyrant! I shan't give way, upon principle. Only think of his stalking off, as black as a thunder-storm, exclaiming, with injured majesty, 'If you care for me, you will not sing at this public concert.'"

"You do care for him, Blanche," I pleaded; "and you know how he has worshipped you all these years."

Her look softened.

"He's such a temper—oh! so passionate; all his self-control couldn't keep him calm. I was absolutely frightened. I shall never forget his look when I tripped into the room. There he stood, holding in his hand the *acte d'accusation*, those lovely programmes. I was allowed to explain, to justify myself; but the more I talked the blacker he looked, and the end of it was, my Lord went off with the dagger-and-poison threat: 'Your money or your life'—'your vanity or your love!' That's the way he put it."

Her anger was cooling; Love had nearly won the day, when, unluckily the maid entered with her new dress—a triumph of Worth's art.

"What a success, perfect clouds of tulle—I must wear it! Besides, Alice, what excuse can I make for throwing them over at the last minute? The prima donna—*noblesse oblige!* For a charity, too, and I can't say I'm ill. John wouldn't wish me to tell a lie."

"Tell the Duchess the truth," I suggested.

"Thanks! to be the laughing-stock of the town. No, no, no!"

"Consider your happiness."

"I do, and I believe we never were suited to each other. As I told John, you are much more like his ideal. He's too superior for me; he makes me feel so small and insignificant, and I have to try so hard to seem better than I am. It's quite a relief to be with an inferior lover like Di Spina,

who blindly worships, and swears I am—what John hopes I may be."

And so the discussion ended. Lady Everest never sang more brilliantly, or looked more lovely, than on the morrow.

CHAPTER VII.

THE last day of the old year found me sitting at my lonely fireside, thinking of the past; my happy childhood-life at Rosedale, my foreign experiences, and now, doubly orphaned, my solitary life. Tears blind my sight, I cannot see the writing on the letter I hold in my hand. I open it, a shower of rose leaves and orange blossoms fall, scattering their sweetness around. It is from Blanche, Lady Everest no longer; from Nice she sends me a few kind words and good wishes for the coming year. Like herself, the letter breathes sunshine and perfume. The postscript says:—

"I met the Dean of St. Arne a few weeks since, looking very handsome, but sterner and more bilious than ever; he seemed quite to have got over his worthless attachment to me—I mean, his attachment to worthless me; enquired affectionately after you, and, I expect, will speedily find his way to the Ideal Woman's fireside—

"' He has brown eyes—beware, beware!
He has a temper—pray take care!'

But I know the caution will be in vain.

"Your ever-loving Cousin,

"BIANCA (sweet!) DI SPINA."

I laughed, with the tears still in my eyes, and springing up, I determined to sally forth on an errand of mercy, and try by making others happy to make myself so.

It was a bright, frosty day. I managed to walk off my

depression, and returned from my poor neighbours with heart and purse both lighter. At the door I waited, hearing a footstep, and turning round, I found myself face to face with John Armstrong.

How handsome he looked, the glowing light of the setting sun shining upon him, as he stood with raised hat and outstretched hand to greet me.

Involuntarily I glanced at his hair; it was grey. He answered the glance—

“White and venerable since we last met. How well you are looking.”

“Through my veil,” I said, and blushed; “but please don’t stand upon the doorstep; come in.” I drew a latch-key from my pocket, and led the way to my den. Very cheerful and comfortable it looked, the firelight shining on the books covering the walls. I drew an arm-chair forward, and made my guest sit down, and throwing off my sealskin jacket and hat, I rang for tea.

“How pleasant your life must be,” he said; “no cares, no troubles.”

“And no pleasures,” I suggested, adding, “I don’t mean that exactly, I have much to be thankful for—

“‘In books, and work, and healthful play,
My latter years will pass.’”

“If I remember rightly, you like six lumps of sugar in your tea?”

“I never touch sugar. I have lost my taste for sweets. That was in the days of my youth.”

He sighed.

After awhile we talked of Blanche, and he told me how her beauty and sprightliness had fascinated him against his judgment; and as he talked, it was as if no shadow had ever come between us.

“Do you know,” I said, “it is just seven years since you preached your first sermon at Rosedale?”

“I preach at the Abbey to-morrow; will you come and hear me and wait, that I may walk back with you.”

The twilight deepened, and as I bent to stir the fire into a flame, he continued—

“ You do not answer, Alice ; may I—I must speak to you.”

“ Never put off to the morrow what you can do to-day,” I laughingly replied.

“ Amen ! So be it,” he said.

Something in his voice made me look up ; the fire-light flashed upon his face, and in his eyes I read what he had to say.

At midnight the bells chimed out, and as I listened to the song, floating on the still air, they brought the sweetest of all messages to me—the song of Hope and Love, and of a new Life dawning in the bright glory of the young year.





MISS MARTINETTE'S ANNUAL PARTY.

BY SUSANNA BALDWIN,

Author of "Lights and Shadows," "Barnaby Becker," &c., &c.

CHAPTER I.

THERE was great preparation and excitement in the Tadpole family on the 22nd of December, 18—. It was the night of the Misses Martinette's annual party, prior to breaking up for the Christmas holidays. Pink frocks which, like the "last rose of summer," were "faded," and white ones, no longer like "the untrodden snow," were taken out; but, *n'impose*, everything, not excepting "women and linen," look best by candle-light. Ruchings were picked out, and frillings on necks and sleeves touched up, and sundry little rents in the flounces, victims to John and Harry Brown's rough tread when playing "Blind Man's Buff," were sewn up; buttons, and hooks and eyes were altered, in consequence of the added growth of the dear children. (Let us hope that the expansion of the mind kept pace with that of the body.) "Five o'clock (sharp), and tea at six," thus ran the missive. "The Misses M. present their compliments to Mr., Mrs., and the Misses and Master Tadpole, and request the pleasure of their company to tea at Twigville Seminary at five o'clock (sharp); tea at six; Christmas tree at nine. Carriages at the door at ten o'clock."

This was the annual note always issued a few days before

Christmas, and the announcement of "Our party, my dears, on the—" was made a month previously. This may seem a long notice, but Paterfamilias is not always in humour to sacrifice at the altar of Minerva, and Minerva, in the form of Miss M., senior, was not above accepting the votive offerings laid on her altar, at 2s. 6d. per head, from the Twigs of Twigville, which, to tell truth, she had sometimes great trouble in bending to what she was pleased to call her "iron will." So Paterfamilias got a long day to "consider the subject," and if trade was particularly flourishing, and all bills due paid, he might (supposing the olive branches amounted to three) present his "black mail," in the shape of a shining piece of gold, fit for the touch of a lady's dainty fingers, instead of three clumsy half-crowns. I would not, for the world, say that Minerva was more gracious to such a Pater and his family than to others. Oh! no! "The gowd is but the guinea stamp, the man's the man for a' that." I only leave a wide margin, and allow my readers to draw their own inference. Well, "there was washing of faces, and brushing of hair, and everything done to make children look fair," and, I, myself, an old bachelor, who am looked upon as an institution in the little village town of Snapperton, and duly receive my own particular invite, was not a little amused by the conversations which I heard between the young Tadpoles—Minnie and Phœbe, aged nine and eight, had been invited before, but Katie and Tommy were novices.

"Now, mind, Tommy, you wipe your feet well on the mat, Miss M. will have on the new tarpaulin."

"I wonder what will be on the tree," quoth Tommy; "any drums or whistles," not heeding the advice proffered.

"I hope I shall get a doll with a pink frock and white necklace," said little Katie, for whom a new frock had been expressly manufactured, this being her *début*. "Are the cakes full of raisins, and shall we have oranges and apples?"

The elder children enlarged on the glories of former trees—the little tapers, the fun and play, the riddles, blind man's buff, and wine negus, mild, very mild in quality, given with a half slice of seed cake at parting. Suffice it to say the

youngsters thought dinner would never be over, and then, at 4 p.m., began the dressing. I, thoughtful man, had ordered my chop at the "Flying Eagle," so as to offer no impediment to the operations. Well, I returned, and arrayed myself in my best suit, and at 5 p.m., presented myself at Twigville. I must describe the place. A neat, square house, with a small garden in front and a white paling. The hall door also white, with a brass knocker of immaculate brightness; mat at the hall door, and every surrounding befitting the proprieties of a spinster scholastic establishment.

Miss and Miss Elfrida Martinette were seated in the neatest of parlours; the mahogany chairs and tables show with an opaque brightness, the lace curtains are like driven snow, and not a chair was out of place. By degrees the company began to assemble, and, as six o'clock rang out, the room was nearly filled, for the gentlemen stood and allowed the fair portion of creation unrestricted privilege of the dark high-backed chairs. There was Mr. Shuffle, the attorney, fat, good-natured and rosy, open to a matrimonial engagement—Dr. and Mrs. Squeamish, pale and nervous; their only hope, a fragile boy of seven, whose mind seemed far in advance of the funny body which contained it. The three Graces, in the shape of the Misses Belinda, Anastatia, and Penelope Doolittle—*un peu passées*—the belle and beau of the village, Lucy Marsh and Harry Long, the former a bright, blackeyed, rosy girl, with a fund of good-humour; the latter a fair-haired Saxon, with fosey whiskers—Lucy and Harry were "very good friends," but nothing more, so they said, and thought too, perhaps. He was Dr. S.'s. help in the establishment, at home and abroad equally when wanted. Then came Mr. Moore, the coal merchant and spouse with half-a-dozen little blackamoors. Mr. Joseph Tymons, and "my Josephine," as he always called his *cara sposa*, with a little lot of Josephines as like as gloves—I shall only say that the "outward" man and woman were not at all like the "*petit caporal*" and the charming Creole, distinctly proving the truth of the adage, "what's in a name?" Mr. and Mrs. Mulholland, the only haberdasher in Snapperton, and a rosy

little girl, aged five, the only hope of the family as yet, and familiarly called "the little heiress." Miss Bastable, the district visitor—Mr. and Mrs. Daniels—a retired naval officer, with a wild pair of orphan nephews—Mr. Bellamy, organist and professor of music, a widower of five and thirty, extremely well-mannered and agreeable. Last of all came Mr. Steepleton, the curate, tall, pale, thin, and interesting, like a half-faded water-lily, with long white hands and taper fingers, intensely polite, a little on the sentimental; his face was like that of some of the olden monks or ascetics, reminding one of long fasts and vigils; "and when he smiled, he smiled in such a sort as if he wondered at himself, that could be moved to smile at anything." But heed not what the world says or thinks of thee, Septimus, a true heart and a kind beats beneath that oft-worn rusty coat, and if the image of a hopelessly blind mother, too helpless for thy care, and with distant relatives, maintained by thee, rises before thy minds-eye, and often checks thy enjoyment, causing thee to be called dull, inanimate, stupid—yet there is a mother's heart which thrills at the name of the last survivor of seven, who sleep in the little mountain church-yard of Westerdale, and "thy record is on high."

Six o'clock struck.

"Mr. Shuffle," said Miss Minerva, "may I trouble you to throw open the folding doors, and admit our friends to the humble repast which we have prepared for their acceptance?"

With "the utmost alacrity," responded the gallant gentleman and obeyed.

At the same moment the four Benedict's advanced with proffered arms to the three Graces and Miss Bastable, hardly knowing where to fix a choice, while the bachelors each apportioned a lady.

Shuffle and Bellamy both darted towards the fair Lucy, who equally evaded their intentions and attentions, by taking the little heiress and puny boy by the hand, and installing herself between them at a corner. The rest of the company having seated the children, stood behind them, attending to their wants, and at intervals sipping the fragrant beverage, which, with a plentiful supply of arrowroot biscuits and dry sponge

cake was handed round. The tea was drunk out of tiny cups which had belonged to "our great grandmother," a daughter of the celebrated Archdeacon Palaver, called so beautifully and truly the "silver tongued"—did you ever hear of him, Mr. Steepleton? "He was a wonderful man."

"Not exactly," replied Mr. S——; "but I remember in my theological reading that one of our early Fathers was named the 'golden tongued.'"

"Wonderful coincidence," says wicked Harry.

"I daresay they were much alike—the relative value of the metals excepted," said Bellamy.

"I daresay there was a far off, distant relationship," persisted Harry, "if it could only be traced."

"Yes, Mr. Long," quoth the attorney, "families are marvellous losers by not attending to family trees and pedigrees, and preserving them carefully—that is, giving them to attorneys, labelled 'to be kept dry, and with care'—finish, Mr. Harry, 'with this side up.'"

"And 'don't shake the tin box,'" said Harry, laughing. "Perhaps you have the Archdeacon's last will and Testament all this time in clover, and will give it up for a 'consideration,'" giving a side-glance at Minerva and the tea-board.

But Shuffle shook his head. He would willingly give up all Minerva's savings, reported to be considerable, for a smile from Lucy. Minerva had invested in the great branch of the Hymalaya Railway—the Trunk and Portmanteau Company—and the Floating Swan Mail Steamer, to the Fiji and Cannibal Islands; but being done through a London stockbroker, the community were ignorant of the amount. At last, tea being over, the children retired to the parlour and hall; blind man's buff, hunt the slipper, riddles and conundrums were the order of the day. It was difficult to keep up anything like a connected conversation, so the grown people began to hunt in couples, and Lucy had joined in the children's sport, and Harry seemed determined to follow suit, and Minerva, junior, shook her little, black, corkscrew ringlets, and told the Reverend Septimus that

she wished "she were a child again, it was so delightful to see those young creatures so full of enjoyment, so pure-minded and artless. What would she not give to be as free from the taint of sin and worldliness."

To which Septimus replied that "it would, indeed, be a blessed thing, if possible, to exchange with one of these Heaven-born young beings, almost fresh from their native skies." (Septimus, being short-sighted, did not see that one of the young angels was untying Katie's sash, and pulling her curls whenever she got a chance, and that George Benson was sticking a pin in the bare necks and arms of the blind-folded).

"But, my dear madam, work is our highest service here, and it is yours to catch these bright dewdrops ere they fall to the earth, and contract its stain."

"Very prettily put," whispered Harry.

"Miss M's is an ethereal, a heavenly occupation," exclaimed Mr. Bellamy.

"Catching dewdrops ere they fall, not quite to ethereal," murmured Harry; "heavy drops, freighted with someting solid."

At last the clock struck nine, and the company adjourned to the school-room, where a large Christmas-tree, laden with little tapers, small silk bags, containing one almond and a few comfits each, little pincushions and needle-books, drums, whips, whistles, and some cheap dolls, highly dressed—dolls to judge, from their red cheeks and bright eyes, in a state of feyerish excitement, perhaps caused by a sense of the honour conferred on them, or a little anxiety to know into whose hands they should fall, and how long their natural lives (in an unmutilated state) should last. After a little fuss about seats, the two ladies standing, Messieurs Shuffle and Bellamy left the room, and entered with a small table, and having placed behind it two chairs, gallantly presented arms to the ladies, and led them to their seats; then made their exit, and re-appeared, bearing a covered basket, which was placed on the table, and, after a solemn pause, Enter Mr. Steepleton—the Reverend, and placing himself so as to bestow his glances equally on

the ladies and general company, read, in a distinct and sonorous voice, the address.

Another rolling year, my friends, brings us to a doubly-festive season—the festival of Christmas, and the happy reunion at Twigville, which we so much prize. I am flattered at being commissioned by the parents of the interesting children, now before me, to convey their feelings of gratitude and love to the estimable ladies of Twigville, and to thank them for the kind care and maternal solicitude, which, combined with a sound, liberal education, they have bestowed on their little ones. I shall not trespass further on your time, my friends, but shall read the address—

"Honoured ladies, we, the undersigned parents and guardians, who have committed our children to your care, beg to present you, on their and our behalf, with the accompanying piece of plate, as a small testimony of our esteem and regard; and we breathe an earnest prayer that they may emulate your examples, and that their mature years may be adorned with virtues, similar to those which are daily exhibited before them."

After a little more fuss the basket was opened by the officiating priests of the temple of Minerva, and a silver teapot appeared, and was exhibited for a few moments in the hands of the Sacerdotes, and then presented with a flourishing bow from the priests; Minerva, senior, then arose, and taking it with a graceful bow and a courtesy to the company, handed it to Minerva, junior, to admire, while she drew from her apron-pocket a folded sheet of paper, and read as follows:—

"Dear and beloved friends, to say that I am astonished and overwhelmed by your munificent gift, and the kindness which prompted it is nothing. Words fail me. 'Expressive silence' is my refuge. I never dreamed that my—that our—puny efforts should be thus rewarded, and I blush to say that I did not fully appreciate the large-hearted kindness of our Snapperton friends; I shall know them better in future; to the young I shall say, 'emulate, my dear children, the example of your elders; go on unto perfection.' My feelings will not allow me to say more." (Here

a snow-white cambric handkerchief was raised to imaginary humid eyes.) "Dear friends, let this be our noble strife,—whether your liberality or our renewed exertions shall outstrip each other. Our pupils' advancement is very dear to our hearts, and we trust that in the bright positions which, doubtless, many of them will yet fill (fie, Minerva; you do not believe one word of what you are now saying), their grateful hearts will revert to the (we hope) firm, though gentle, guidance of their friends at Twigville. My friends, I can say no more. Farewell."

Minerva sinks into a seat with a graceful inclination; Minerva, junior, ditto.

"Up with the flag," whispered Harry, as the white cambric again fluttered.

"How beautiful! What pathos!" was murmured through the room. "Miss M. is greatly affected, poor dear. Her exertions have broken her down."

Ten o'clock struck. The little people began to move. Minerva suggested "they had better wait for the—carriages sounded too much,—vehicles, which duly appeared in the shape of some stout servants, who whipped up the younger children in their arms—the elder walking, having been previously fortified by a wine-glass of negus and a half-slice of seed cake.

CHAPTER II.

HARDLY had the children left when a thundering knock came to the door, and after a few whispered words outside, entered a tall blonde, in black grenadine, semi-transparent body, a massive gold chain and cameo brooch, a white rose coquettishly placed at the side of the rich brown banded hair from which a fall of black lace fell gracefully back.

"Oh! Mrs. MacGullim, how late!" exclaimed several voices.

"Mrs. MacGullim's late is better than another's early," said the gallant attorney.

"Precisely so," echoed Mr. Bellamy.

"How kind you are!" said Mrs. M'G. "But I believe everyone is kind. Don't you think so Mr. S.?" with a languishing smile at Septimus. "I am sure there is a great deal of good in the world, if we only knew how to draw it out."

"You ought to give us lessons, Mrs. M'G.," said Mr. Shuffle, "for I think you capable of developing any good that may be lying dormant in a man's disposition."

"Oh, dear! Mr. S., but you are so complimentary."

"Not more than is due," growled the lady's escort, with a sinister look at Shuffle.

"My dear Miss M., we only arrived an hour or two since. The Captain drove me to Rashley Villa this morning, but we stayed to luncheon. They are such a delightful family, I forgot that time flies. Oh! Mr. Bellamy, if you only heard Miss Claribelle play and sing! She is a pupil of Benedict's. I only had time to dress and take a cup of tea. So the little folks have gone! Poor dears! I am sure they were delighted with their evening. What happy dreams they will have! And may—oh! may I ask to see the presentation? (Exit teapot from its wicker receptacle.) What a beauty! Now, Captain, it was all your fault, my not hearing the address.—Miss Claribelle is too fascinating, Miss Martinette.—I shall not take you again. See what I have lost! I must ask some one else to drive me."

"I thought it was I took you," growled Pickacafas, the jealous, who did not enjoy the delighted looks of Bellamy and Shuffle when "some one else" was suggested.

S. had a trim Norway, and it was only a degree below the Captain's trap, in that it was minus the savage and club borne by the house of Pickacafas (though wicked Harry said it should have been a miner and pickaxe, in which case the contrast would not have been so great as existed between a man, hammer in hand, and the savage chief—old S. having followed that striking occupation.)

"Yes, my dear friend, you did take me—in—for I went into Rashley, and I could not get out again—poor little starling, that I was."

Black thunder sits upon the Captain's brow ; delight is too palpable on the visages of the pretenders. It was a game of chess, not hearts. The Captain had *prestige* and half-pay which, added to dear MacGullim's little fee-simple, would enable the charming Fanny to dress better and to look more charming still ; and if Jove was not in a thunder-cloud, Juno might still dispense orange Pekoe, and strawberries and cream, and "*un petit souper*" after, to her admirers—for Fanny always had, and always will have, admirers.

Maid, wife, or widow, it was all one. Who could resist the pretty, beseeching look and smile, added to a soft voice, a fine graceful figure, and very sweet face ? Kind and good-natured, hospitable but heartless. Still, "she was the girl for bewitching them," as the old Irish song says. I never read that naughty book, *Don Juan*, but I heard a dashing widow—a fine, talented creature, with a rich brogue and rather coarse voice, yet looking every inch a queen, descended, as she was, from one of the old Milesian princes, quote the lines—

" Of all the arrows in the Devil's choice,
There's nothing for the heart, like a soft voice."

At eighteen, Fanny was a "good establishment" hunter. Dozens of poor youths, raw ensigns, banker's clerks, and attorneys' ditto, lost their hearts to her ; and then the poor wretches would say, as they underwent sentence—

" But you gave me encouragement else I should not have presumed."

" No more than to everyone else," Fanny, the "fause and fair," would reply. " What did you think I was going to live on ? Love ? I could not subsist on that alone. My nature is not spiritual enough, ethereal."

And the unfortunates could not deny it. All were encouraged equally—one sometimes pitted against another, and though the Ladies Marchwell would not think of Fanny's beaux, in general, yet, when they and the nice, quiet Merediths, the Rector's daughters, saw Major Whittin, the stately commanding officer of the 131st, and Lord Marcus Moustache, of the same honourable corps, carrying on a

little badinage with the belle of Frampton (albeit, her father was only under agent and man of law to the Marquis of M., and completely at the beck of Simpson Brothers, a most respectable law firm in the next town), they could not repress a little virtuous indignation, at the notion of Fanny cocking her cap at their equals, if not admirers. Yet all allowed her charms, and even more—that not the shadow of a shade rested on her fair fame. Not a boisterous word, or unladylike action had ever been attributed to Fanny, save and except her cruelty to her boy admirers. A heartless, fascinating flirt, lady-like, and kind-hearted. This summed up her character.

Lucy M—— knew that many a poor person in her father's parish got a strong cup of tea, or bowl of soup, and the broken meat from Mac Taggart's table, and that her father never was refused a subscription from Fanny; they did not care to be intimate, and sent the old widower to the cottage; and though the sum given was small, yet there was a grace and a sweetness in its dispensation which few men could resist. Heaven knows how Fanny picked up the acquaintance of the Lord and the Major, but though they never called, yet their hats were off or touched as politely as to the Ladies Blanche and Emma. A true gentleman recognises woman, whatever be her class, and shows himself the gentleman in so doing. Had Fanny been less the flirt, less fond of a troop of danglers, Lucy M—— would have taken more notice of the motherless girl, younger than herself—in years, but not in heart, and the bad experiences often gained at boarding schools. She would have been a real help in the parish, with her graceful, winning, sympathising ways, but prudence forbade, and yet, had there been a little advance, Fanny might have been a different, at least, a less worldly woman. She never intruded on her betters; a cheerful, friendly, "How do you do Miss M.?" and a kind enquiry when there was any illness in the family, but never had their hands met. Fanny felt that she was beyond her own sphere, and above, in tastes and intellect, the shopkeeper's daughters, and she contented herself with shining in lonely loveliness—feeding on homage. Poor stubble! It

did not satisfy at first, but she argued with herself that love was the luxury of the rich, and if those who would have married her had not the "shiners," as her father called them, she must think of those who had, and take the highest offer, and so she set herself to captivate all mankind. Had she let the poor penniless boys escape, who would have blamed her? Why should not every woman learn to fascinate, if Heaven have not endowed her well, the gifts of beauty and manners? Is there any harm in trying to rival the sweetness of the rose? The same hand formed it and the onion. Need we be rough to be sincere? or dowdy and homely because we will not set up for more than we are? Then, Mrs. Sincerity, when you invite your friends, put out the china of your every-day repast, wear the same dress, no company manners—keep the best silver in its receptacle. Let not good John Brown say, "Well, my wife is no beauty, but she looks very nice when she is dressed. I wish she would burn that old brown stuff."

But, good John, would you like to see her mixing pies and puddings in her new black silk, and a flour daub on the front thereof? It cost you £5 sterling. You can't afford a housekeeper, and Mary Anne must do the culinary herself. But I shall tell you, John, what to do; bring Mary Anne a bright ribbon, and tell her if she wears that and a fresh collar every morning, a fresh ribbon will be forthcoming when that is faded; and you may put up with the house-stuff a little longer, with a proviso that something better (not the silk) be put on for your arrival at dinner time. And now, before I have done with Fanny, I would ask, why should not our lady friends, whose education has, in some instances, cost much; not merely be content to attract unmarried, but strive to keep up the attraction after? Why not press their taste, their accomplishments into the service of religion and home, and, without neglecting one department, attend to the claims of another? Where there are easy means, this may easily be done, and, in any case, a pleasant home, a smile and welcome, a bright fire and cleanliness, though its sole adornment be a vase of primroses, will help to establish more firmly a "woman's kingdom."

Having discarded the poor youths, Fanny looked out for an "eligible," which, in due time, appeared in the person of John M'Gullim, a retired quarter-master in the line, a keen scot who had saved, and bought the fee-simple of the pretty cottage, paddock, lawn and garden, which he settled on "Miss Fanny," who, in consideration thereof, settled on him her fair self and whatever trifle her father might be able to give her at his death—for the old man lived well and was hospitable, and his daughter's beauty and pleasing manners brought many a straggler to his table.

M'Gullim came, saw, and conquered—being first conquered himself.

"I can't afford to marry a poor man," said Fan, "and perhaps 'tis little enough poor old Pap will leave me, I can't do better, and may do worse."

So one fine morning the fair Fanny was led to the hymeneal altar—the bridegroom had a best man, but F. would not condescend to Frampton bridesmaids, and the marriage was private and without those lovely appendages who are invariably supposed to be on next for promotion.

There was an elderly lady, a distant cousin to matronize and preside at the breakfast table, for though there were neither beaux or belles, yet there was breakfast and bride-cake, of which the Rector carried off a goodly portion, and Fanny slipped a sovereign into his hand for the poor as she stepped into the carriage which was to convey her from her childhood's home. The worthy man's fee had not been forgotten.

"I'll be back to see you soon, Pap," said the bride, as her father kissed her, unwilling to part.

"Kezia, take good care of him till I return, and you shall have a gingerbread husband from—fair; but the speech did not excite the laugh that F. intended; the old man's heart was heavy, and his eye moist, for he had lost a good daughter.

However, Kezia did her duty carefully and honourably, without making matrimonial advances.

While he lived, his daughter took care to make frequent flying and unexpected visits, but never was Kezia "caught napping."

In process of time, Fanny buried both her father and husband, and now, again was a candidate for matrimony; at least, there were candidates for her hand, but none of the gentlemen would venture a declaration, as none wished to risk a refusal, and all knew that Fanny would weigh the man by his purse, and thought their chances might be better when that became a little heavier.

Kezia was indefatigable in her care of the old man, who left her a trifle in his will—putting aside conscience, in which she was by no means deficient; the snug little home over which she presided, was a great improvement on the hot, close, smoky lodging, on which she had to fall back after the wreck of the vessel, in which a good, kind brother went down to the depths of ocean, and left her to struggle with a paralyzed mother, alone.

The Rector had not failed her, and Fanny's father had been as kind as their means would allow. Many little niceties found their way from the rectory to the afflicted woman, but Lucy's visits were timed so as to preclude meeting the fair Fanny—nearing her dinner hour—so it was always “stand aloof;” and though Lucy would not have said, “I am holier than thou,” yet she thought and said, “I hate flirts.” However, Fanny made as good a wife as daughter, and being again happy in the possession of admirers, she, like a good general, kept her forces in reserve, till their aid might be needed in the attack which she had almost decided in making on the Pickacafas fort. In her heart she liked Bellamy best—by virtue and manners a gentlemen, but poor—a foolish father left a young, ill-provided family to struggle through the world; Edward's tastes led him to music as a profession—his ambition to college and the church—but never had that bright dream been realised, and, unless the acquisition of Fanny's hand and fortune enabled him, never would it be.

The cheapness of the little village—the fair remuneration for his musical church services, and the few tuitions around, including Minerva's establishment, were sufficient inducements to remain; the healthful air, pretty scenery, and spare time which a secluded village allows, permitted his

continuing his studies, with a vague hope or a happy termination. His position did not allow of intimacy at the rectory, but the Rector, kind man, knew Bellamy's history, and often sent a package of new books to the young man's lodgings. The infatuation which had led Edward, a penniless boy of twenty, to marry a girl who left him a widower at twenty-one, was past—and past, too, with her death, his prospects; for her old father, with whom they lived, and who was able, through the influence of his money bags, to push him on, died for grief at the loss of his only child, and a lucrative business fell to the ground; Edward did not understand it, and sold it. Just then his mother fell ill, and a long tedious sickness, with doctor's fees and bills, and all the little delicacies which an invalid requires, made sad inroads on his purse; while his old father-in-law's means lasted, he never spared them. He had funded the money which he received for the house, business interest, and furniture, and gone to live with his mother. On her illness, funeral, &c., his yearly interest soon went. His three young sisters were placed at a boarding school with a view to their going out as governesses, and for this purpose some of his principal had been encroached on, and now he had vowed not to touch what remained. Esther had married from her first situation, and had now a little family of her own, and Jessie and Marian were nicely provided for, and giving satisfaction.

"But, till they are married I shall remain single," said Edward, "unless, indeed, it were greatly to the advantage of all parties."

So he remained on the list of Fanny's admirers, he knew her virtues and her faults and history, and was willing to bide his time.

The widow was gracious to all three. Shuffle had money, and a quiet, easy temper, brimful of good humour; the Captain, position and half pay, but there was a strong dash of the cruets about him (the vinegar predominating): he certainly got most encouragement, and seemed to consider her his property, already; and Edward, as we have seen, had but his hopes and his prospects, something in reserve as a

trifling portion for his sisters, and his own exertions to depend on. The girls were frugal, and saved what they could spare from their salaries, for, as they said, "They owed it to dear Edward not to encroach further on him ; he had done so much for them all."

In vacation time they went alternately to Esther and him, and the brother felt a pleasure in shewing off the nice, lady-like sisters, who bore the mark of breeding and education in all they did and said, and contrasting them with the ladies of Snapperton.

Just then the Rector's wife would unbend a little, and call on "those nice girls," as she always designated them ; but there was no invitation. The Snappertoniens never were, and never expected to be, invited to the Rectory. Mrs. Killingley was fully occupied with her very young family, kept up morning visiting only with the county gentry around ; but in times of sorrow or illness she never failed to sympathise with her husband's parishioners. Her flowers and fruit were always at the invalid's service, and her kind, quiet calls—only made then—were never under-valued.

The girls returned the visit ; played and sang to her delight, walked all over the place, and were introduced anew to all the children, and questioned as to their opinion of their growth and improvement since last year, and were laden with flowers. Every day a little basket of fruit, flowers, or vegetables, or a new book now and again, found its way to Edward's lodgings.

The Bellamys perfectly understood, but never passed the rubicon of position, and felt that in their brother's case, and aloof as Mrs. K. was from intimacy with the Snapper-ton people, she could not make a distinction ; so they sensibly and gratefully accepted the proffered kindnesses, and Mrs. Killingley, in her heart, hoped (though for worlds she would not express it) that something might yet occur which would give her a chance of enlisting one or other of them in the education of her children.

CHAPTER III.

HAVING at last seated herself to her satisfaction, the widow commenced her trade of fascinating.

"And who chose the teapot, Miss Martinette? It is a secret! Ah, well! we'll find it out, one of these days." (With a glance round at the gentlemen in turn.)

No longer was Minerva the lioness of the evening. Fanny, as usual, had it all her own way. Harry alone was not her devoted slave.

"You are looking poorly, Mr. Steepleton. Oh! you work too hard; don't you think so, Miss Lucy? Miss Martinette, I would not have missed the tree and the dear children, but a fine day is such a treat, and the Captain is not always at leisure to drive me" (said Captain having no occupation, earthly or heavenly). "How does your little fellow get on this winter, Mrs. Squeamish? I need not ask after your rosebud, Mrs. Moore; she is a perfect Hebe."

"Captain Pickacafas," said Mr. Shuffle, "you are a judge; is not this weather very bad for hunting?"

"Very bad; too soft, sir, too soft. You may slip, sir," growled the Captain.

Poor Captain P. never got beyond a bare opinion, but he did not charge six and eightpence for it.

"What do you think of the ministry, Captain?"

"Bad lot, sir, bad lot; can't stand."

"What do you think of the Irish Church?"

"Well, sir, it is twenty years since I was quartered there, and the church was so far off we could not go to it—there was a bog between us and it. But the rector asked some of us to spend a few days—very gentlemanlike man, sir, very; nice daughters."

"Was he an active man, Captain?" quoth Septimus.

"Oh! very, very active. By George, sir," said the Captain, warming to his subject; "he could take the country like a boy—he was sixty-five—no fence would stop him, but he was a Galway, sir; my mother, sir, had Irish blood. Those days are past and gone, when Lay and Crown patronage

provided aristocratic cadets with fat livings. Our Irish Church will yield the palm to a Blake, sir, a Blake ; boys and girls, they step out."

At this juncture, supper was announced. The various married couples exchanged, for the nonce, husbands and wives. Mr. Bellamy tried to forestal Harry with Lucy, and succeeded, but Harry knew he would have a quiet walk home, by-and-by, so he resigned himself to his fate, and offered his arm to Minerva No. 2; the Captain and Attorney both advanced to the widow ; she chose the latter, and the hero then addressed Minerva, senior, so Septimus fell back on Miss Bastable, though he often wished he could get near Lucy.

But what a scene presented itself at the supper-table,—large turkey, *vis-a-vis* a ham, roast beef, tongue, apple pie, tarts, custards, mince pies, apples, oranges, grapes, figs, almonds ; the Captain at the head of the table, Mr. Shuffle at the foot. The good things were discussed with great gusto, and then the wine was passed, and the toasts were given.

"I propose," said Mr. Shuffle, "the toast of the evening —our worthy hostesses ; may they long live to dispense their hospitality, and to give us many such delightful reunions as that we are now enjoying. Long and happy lives to the Misses Martinette. Nine times nine, and three cheers more. Hip, hip, hurrah!"

When the tumult had somewhat subsided, the Captain was called on to return thanks, which he did, in the following neat and appropriate terms :—

"My friends, on the part of the estimable ladies we are met to honour, I return you my best thanks, I think, my friends, we have most appropriately chosen a tea-pot for presentation, for we have not only a prospect of, I hope, enjoying many pleasant evenings here, and sipping the fragrant beverage, which 'cheers but not inebriates ;' but we are sure, very sure, gentlemen, that no breath of scandal, no gossip, will ever circulate round this festive board, but that 'the feast of reason and the flow of soul' will elevate our minds, and we shall look back, and look forward, too, to

these evenings as oases in Life's desert. On the part of the Misses Martinette, I thank you."

Mr. Steepleton was then called on to reply to "the Ladies," given by Mr. Bellamy, including "our Juveniles and the Friends here assembled. "Our next merry meeting," given by myself, and responded to by the half-pay officer. I shall only give Mr. Steepleton's speech:—

" My friends, I feel greatly honoured by being called on to reply to this toast. I feel quite inadequate to do so in a style befitting the occasion. It has been my fate in life to be sisterless and brotherless, so, of female influence, I know not very much; but, as becomes my cloth, I am ready to hope all things in charity, and to believe that they (the ladies) are the bright drops which sweeten life's bitter cup. I remember little, indeed, of one parent, but I know what a mother's love is, and I often tremble to think that the only tie of relationship I possess hangs on one feeble life. But, my friends, who are surrounded by numerous olive branches (and may they long be spared to you), educate them to be good and to be useful; sigh not if they do not profit as much as you desire, from the education they receive here. The mind sometimes opens slowly; the heart must be educated too. Even should 'Music, and her sister, Song' (bowing to Bellamy), and 'all the Talents' (to the Misses M.), possess no charm for them, there (more in talent, piety, and devotion to duty; her ministers are now not hunters, but fishers of men), is a charm, that of the loving and feeling heart, and the kind hand which will smoothe the sick pillow, and minister alike to the diseased mind and body; and there is an ornament—even that of 'a meek and quiet spirit,' which is, in the sight of God and of man, too, 'of great price.' And should it be your lot, as it was that of my parents, in the lone churchyard, and to be in a few years bereaved of all your children—save the most delicate, he who now addresses you—may it be your consolation to remember that there is a world of reunions, as well as of partings, and that the reunion there is an everlasting one. I have not forgot that I respond for the ladies, and shall remind our gentlemen friends that—

'Earth was a wild, and man, the hermit, sigh'd,
Till woman smiled.' "

Loud applause followed poor Septimus's speech; he did not expect it, and his pale face flushed with surprise and emotion, for tears stood in Lucy's eyes, and in Fanny's too. He had touched the right chord. Lucy was an orphan, and Fanny thought of "poor old Pap," to whom she had been a good daughter; indeed, Fanny's husband had no reason to complain of her, in the capacity of wife, either. Bellamy's quick eyes saw the effect on both ladies, and his generous mind felt no jealousy.

"Bravo, Mr. S.," he said, "your's is the speech of the evening."

"But his theme is an inspiring one," Lucy said.

"Precisely so, and the theme is worthy of the man, and the man of the theme."

Bellamy and Septimus were friends; each knew the other's story, and Edward wished, when Septimus spoke of his own tie of relationship, that his Jessie might form a second. He had often wished it, but repressed the thought as he remembered how fragile his friend looked. He will sleep in Westerdale, too, thought he. I pray the poor mother may go first.

"I wish that I could speak like that," said Harry to Lucy; "but your college men always outshine us. One o'clock strikes. Is it possible? Time flies. We were so pleasant." Edward looks at Harry—both rise, glass in hand. "To our next merry meeting!" They fill for the ladies, who remain seated. "Fly not yet," followed by "Here's a Health to all good Lasses," is pleasingly given by the two young men, those who can joining in the choruses: "Good night, good night, Miss Martinette," and the muffling begins, and the hall-door shuts on the last of the revellers, and they wend their ways homewards, and so ends Miss Martinettes' Annual Party, for the year of Grace, 18—; but 'tis possible we may hear "what came of it" at some future day.



Christmas Eve at a Cornish Manor-house.

By CLARA VENN,

Author of "Two Brides," &c., &c.

IT was a bleak, stormy afternoon, two or three years ago, on which my twin-sister, Alice, and I, found ourselves, for the first time, in a wild corner of the west of England.

"Come and spend Christmas in an uncivilised fashion with us, in our old Manor—built four hundred years ago." wrote a school-friend; "we cannot boast of 'every modern convenience' in our surroundings—that would be an anachronism,—but if you can spend a merry Christmas amongst Bohemians, we will give you a hearty welcome."

We readily accepted the invitation, and having never done without modern conveniences in our lives, of course, we made up our minds that it would be charming to do so now—to spend Christmas after the fashion of four hundred years ago, if we could discover how it *was* spent then, and, in short, that the season would be much merrier than usual, without nineteenth century conventionality. Perhaps it was; but certainly our first experience of the ancient customs was rather a rude shock to us both, and I am afraid we felt a decided preference for later ones.

We made part of our journey from Clifton by rail, and at the last point we could reach in that way, procured a travelling carriage, which we shared with a friend, who was

going some distance further than we, and would leave us at the little town of Laresminster, where Mr. Bellew was to meet us, in his carriage. When we reached our halting-place it was late, and a cold mist from the sea was driving over the hills, making us shiver as we stepped out of the close carriage at the door of the little inn, where we expected to find what our friend called his "trap." Nothing was visible, and we hastened to ask whether any one was awaiting us within.

"If he has forgotten us," said Alice, calmly, "of course we can get a carriage here and go on. I think Emmie over-coloured her description—you see there is an inn even in Bohemia."

We were extremely glad to enter it and get out of the fog for a few minutes, earnestly hoping that the carriage sent for us might not be an open one. None had yet arrived; we waited several minutes listening for the sound of approaching wheels; it was half an hour past the time we had named, and still none came.

"Very strange," said Alice, at last. "They would get our letter this morning, fixing the time for our coming."

A sudden and very unpleasant idea crossed my brain. "What time do they get letters in Nectansham?" I asked our hostess. "Is it once or twice a-day?"

"Oh, only once a-day, ma'am," she answered, lifting her eyebrows in a little surprise. "About three o'clock in the afternoon; but they're late to-day; didn't go away from here above an hour afore you come. They didn't use to send the letters round to the house there, but they was going to begin last week; leastways, so I've heard tell."

My sister and I looked at each other. Was a postal delivery among the "modern conveniences" that our friends could not boast of?

"Oh, never mind," said Alice, determined to make the best of the matter. "I am afraid they won't get the letter in time to send for us; but you will be able to find us a carriage, will you not?" turning to the landlady. "A close one, please, as it is so cold to-night."

"I am very sorry, ma'm," was the answer. "We don't

keep no post-horses here. If you could put up with a cart, and wasn't afraid to trust yourselves with a young horse, my husband would drive you over."

"Oh, a dog-cart," I said. "Yes, we don't at all mind that, if we must have an open vehicle."

"Well, ma'am, p'raps that's what you call it," said she. "We calls it here a spring-cart. It'll take you over in a little more than an hour."

"Thank you," we said; "please let us have it as soon as you can."

We had already refreshed ourselves with some tea, so Alice suggested that we should go and look at the church, which was close by, while the dog-cart was being prepared. Lights were burning as we entered it; feeling rather ashamed of ourselves, because Evensong was just over, instead of about to begin, and we seemed to have avoided the service. We saw a fine, old church, with three aisles running parallel to the east end the chancel enclosed by wooden screens, whose rare carving delighted us both. Rows of tall granite pillars supported the roof, where there was more carving on the rafters, and splendid bosses fixed where they crossed. The seats were low, oaken benches, black with age, and immensely thick: carved with curious arabesques, and some with more significant designs. Looking round the walls, we saw that the church, unfortunately, possessed friends in the last century, who had left unmistakable traces of the time when ideas of church furnishing were a medley of coats-of-arms, skulls, cross-bones, and sheep-pens. The end of one aisle was a mortuary chapel; there the windows were filled with portraits, *In Memoriam*. The chancel was reverently closed; but we stood at the gate to admire the beauty within, and, after a few quiet minutes, left the church, wondering that we had not been summoned before to continue our journey. We found, however, that we had still some time to wait.

"All ready, ladies," said the landlord, appearing at last, whip in hand. And we went out of the inn parlour, to behold an unmistakable market-cart, and to experience the pleasure of a journey therein for the first time in our lives.

"How do you get into it?" said Alice to me. "I wish we had not to begin Bohemianism before we get to Waddonscombe Manor."

At last we were settled. Alice and the driver on the front seat. I at the back, having very little room for my feet, as I soon found—for our trunk took up nearly all the space at the bottom. The sea-fog came round us denser than ever, and Alice put up her umbrella.

"It's raining fast," said she.

"Oh, no! ma'am," said our companion. "This isn't to say raining; it's what you may call a sea-mist—that's all."

"But I'm quite wet—look here!" she protested, brushing the drops off her cloak.

"Yes, to be sure, ma'am; that's the way of it," he answered, so contentedly, that I was quite exasperated; for I slipped off my seat periodically, and could hardly keep the railway-rug over my knees, far less hold up an umbrella; while Alice's gave me continual pokes in the back of my neck.

Presently we turned down a steep hill.

"This here's called the unlucky road," said the driver. "Somboby's always comin' to grief on it, and this is a young horse, so I'm sure I don't know what he'll do. I hope you're not nervous, ladies?"

I assured him that we were not, and so burdened my conscience with a falsehood.

"After we get down this hill, and up the next one, I don't rightly know my way," he continued; "but I suppose we shall get somewhere at last."

It was so dark by this time that we could not see the horse's head; but after, as it seemed to me, creeping slowly down the side of a house, we began to ascend still more slowly on the opposite side. A light gleamed at the top of the hill, and, as it was the only thing we could see, our man stopped, and shouted at it. In two or three minutes we heard footsteps, and a little boy stood beside us.

"Tell us the way to Waddonscombe, can 'ee," said the driver.

"Yes," was the welcome answer.

"Would 'ee like a ride?"

And actually that misguided child did consent to climb up beside us in the darkness and be brought home to his enraged mother, dripping with the sea-mist, for the pleasure of being jolted for two miles in a spring-cart. We were devoutly thankful when at length two immense gate-posts seemed to rise out of the blackness before us and the child-guide cried, "Here's Waddonscombe!"

We drove through the gate and stopped at a door in the wall within. A thundering knock brought out a servant, holding a lantern in her hand, which lighted up her figure and the low granite archway in which she stood. We jumped out of the cart, leaving our luggage and the driver to her care, crossed a little court, and, passing through another door, entered the old dining-hall of the Manor-house, feeling much the same desire for light and warmth that induces moths to commit suicide in their efforts to reach it.

The table was spread for tea, a huge fire crackled on the hearth, and our host was marching, in an irritated fashion, up and down the room, while Emmie stood by the fire with a newly-arrived post-bag on the ground at her feet, out of which she had just taken the letter which we supposed would arrive early in the morning.

"Walter, what can we do?—this is dreadful," we heard her say, as the door was opened for us; but a surprised shout from her husband made her turn suddenly as we entered.

"My dear Fanny, my dear Alice!" she exclaimed, rushing to meet us, "what must you have thought of me? I have only just got your letter saying you would arrive at Laresminster to-day, and all yesterday we expected to hear. Why didn't you write before?"

"Oh, we thought you'd get the letter this morning," said I. "However, never mind now, Emmie. It was our own fault, and after all we have managed to reach you, in spite of the sea-fog and by means of a Bohemian conveyance called a spring-cart."

"No, you don't say so," said her husband. "You didn't come all the way in a spring-cart."

"From Laresminster; yes, we did," answered Alice. "Thank goodness that's over."

"I thought you might find Nectansham a little wild, but I never dreamt of your having such an experience as this," he answered. "However it's cruel to laugh, and really I'm extremely sorry for you, for you must be wretched. Is Miss Cary's room ready, Emmie?"

"Oh, yes," said she. "Come upstairs and get warm, you poor, dear things."

She took us up a curious wooden staircase to an equally curious bedroom, where, through a little loop-hole in the wall, we could see the dining-hall below.

"That is the Lady Châtelaine's peep," said Emmie. "It was made that she might see her husband feasting. Let me help you unpack," and she took possession of my keys and made us sit by the fire; then after we had got rid of wet cloaks, hats, and boots, she took us down to the "high tea" which was awaiting us, and we discussed our adventures, after which we were glad to go to bed early.

Next day was Christmas Eve. We unpacked; we helped our hostess stir her Christmas pudding, "a time-honoured custom" this, as she declared, and as such we were bound to observe it; then we went off to the church, which was to be decorated for the following day's service. Emmie's children accompanied us, a boy of about seven and a sweet, little golden-haired girl, a most irrepressible chatterbox, whose Christian name was quite superseded by the sobriquet, "Princess."

At the church we met Emmie's nearest neighbour, Mrs. Danvers, with her little girl, a most motherly little being, in charge of a rather obstreperous younger brother. Their mother kept a watchful eye on both children, but we thought Norah would have been quite equal to her duty as nurse if it had been left to her alone. The church was old and very picturesque, built at different periods, as the union of Norman, Early English, and Tudor architecture shewed; but all the more interesting on this account, though sadly out of repair. It was nearly dark when our work was over, and we were all glad to return to Waddonscombe, Mrs.

Danvers and her little girl coming also for a cup of tea, before they continued their road home.

"No one would believe what gruesome work church decoration is," said Mrs. Danvers, as we all made our toilet upstairs, preparatory to kettledrum.

"*Gruesome*," said Alice, laughing; "is that another word from the Nectansham dictionary? I have heard a great many new terms to-day."

"My dear good lady," was the reply, "you'll both be infected with our vulgarity before you leave Cornwall. '*Gruesome*' is not Cornish, though—it's a Lincolnshire word for dirty."

The drawing-room at Waddonscombe was panelled with oak, very dark and polished; its doors opened with iron latches, and not even its modern furniture could redeem it from the Middle Ages, to which it belonged of right, but the fire had been let out, so we went at once into the dining-hall, where we had been welcomed the night before.

A large fire burnt on the wide, open, hearth. Two great logs, upheld by high brass dogs, were the *pièce de résistance* supplemented by coal and various smaller branches. Tea was brought in, and Emmie would have ordered the lamp; but we begged her to leave us to the fire-light, which was quite bright enough, and shone in red gleams on the white walls, revealing curious pictures, and little shields bearing the arms of former inhabitants long ago departed. The warm glow found out the rafters of the high vaulted roof, leaving in deep shadow the minstrel gallery at the lower end of the hall.

The living inmates of the place harmonised better than could have been expected with its old world character. Emmie's evening dress was a black velveteen; the open bodice trimmed with old point that might have been worn by any ancestress, and Alice and I wore some old-fashioned brocades; the children were always prettily dressed in a quaint, fanciful, style, that kept their mother's brains busy devising new costumes, and was in harmony with their quaint surroundings.

"Now, Emmie if you presided over a wassail bowl instead

of a tea-set, we might imagine that the sun-dial had gone back four hundred years," said Alice.

"It would be easy to imagine, instead, that there is a ghostly company of men and women of that time in the darkness of the minstrel gallery," said I. "Have you a ghost here, Emmie?"

"No," she answered; "is it not strange? There is a vague idea amongst us that it would be fit and proper to have one, but no authentic story of any apparition."

"I think all the old inhabitants must have been very exemplary people," said my sister, "or surely one unquiet spirit would haunt the scene of its former ill-deeds."

"I don't think they were," said Mrs. Danvers. "They say murder has been done here, and there is a secret chamber in the drawing-room chimney, so that one quite expects a ghost story at Waddonscombe, and it is most extraordinary not to hear one. Now, Westdown, which is not nearly such an old house, had a ghost."

"*Had* a ghost," I said. "Surely you have not lost such a possession!"

"It was laid," she replied.

"Oh! do tell us the story!" exclaimed Alice and I together.

"Well," said she, "soon after we took the house we were told it was haunted, but we never heard or saw anything of the ghost for some time. At last, one Sunday afternoon, I was left alone in the house as usual, for I always let the servants go to church, and stayed at home with Norah, who was then a baby. Jack had walked up to the village to see if there were any letters for us, because they used to be left there, and we had to send for them. I was just going to put Norah to bed, when down came Mr. and Mrs. Land, who lived at Sanctuary. I asked if they had not seen Jack, who was just gone up the road. However, they had not seen him, so I wanted them to come in, but Mr. Land preferred walking about the garden with a cigar, while his wife came up to the nursery with me. Presently we heard heavy steps in the passage, and thought it must be Mr. Land, so we called to him to come up to us, and as he did not appear, or answer, she looked over the bannisters."

"It's very odd," she said, "there's no one there. Can it be Captain Danvers trying to play us a trick?"

But I told her if it was Jack, he would not stay down stairs by himself. Presently Mr. Land did come up, and we told him our story, but he was positive that no one had entered the house, for he had been watching for Jack's return.

"It must be the ghost," I said. Just then we heard the steps again, right through the hall, as if they were coming up stairs.

"Ghost or no ghost, I'll be even with it now," said Mr. Land, springing up and dashing down stairs. But he saw no more than his wife, and soon came back again. A few minutes later Jack arrived.

"I say, Danvers," said Mr. Land, "you know its no use your coming to play ghost on us."

"What do you mean?" he said, quite surprised.

"Why, you know you've been in before?"

"No, I've only just come back, honour bright," he answered. So they told him the story, saying, "it must have been a ghost; and then if you believe it, actually took him away with them, and left me alone in the house. Wasn't it too bad?"

"Yes, indeed," I replied. "Well, was that all you heard of the ghost?"

"No," said she. "About a month afterwards, Jack had gone to dine at Sanctuary, and I intended to sit up for him. Now I'd an old cook, that we had known for years; she had been my nurse when Norah was born, and then thought she'd like to stay with me. She was a very good cook, only the other servants used to say that she had the cooks' weakness for something stronger than water. At ten o'clock that night, the old lady came into the drawing-room, and said: 'If you please ma'am, we'd like to go to bed if you don't want anything more, and we have put Master's slippers and things all ready for him?'"

"Oh, certainly," I said, "Go to bed, all of you. He can let himself in, indeed, if he's not very late, I'll sit up for him."

So off she went, and I'm sure she had nothing to drink

that night. I waited a few minutes, trimming the baby's dress, until at last I got so frightened, sitting up by myself, that I couldn't stay any longer ; so I went upstairs, and got into bed as fast as I could. It was not long before I heard steps in the hall, and thought they must be Jack's, only it was wonderful for him to come home so early ; but then, whoever it was, went into the kitchen and made a great noise, opening and shutting doors, and I thought, What can he be looking for down there ? Then the steps came out of the kitchen, right up the stairs, past the door of my room. I was sure now it could not be Jack, for he would have come straight in, and then they went down stairs, and I heard no more. You may imagine I did not go to sleep very soon. Jack came home about two o'clock. I said, "Have you been in long?" but he answered, "No, I've only just come back," so I said no more, thinking I'd better keep my ghost story quiet.

Next day the old cook said to me, "If you please ma'am, did you hear a noise last night about half-past ten or eleven?"

"A noise," I said, "What do mean?"

"Oh, steps in the passage, ma'am, and some one opening the kitchen cupboards."

I was obliged to say, "Yes."

"Well ma'am," she said, "It's very strange that we both heard it. Last night, after we was all in bed, I heard some one coming through the passage, and I thought, Master's home wonderfully early ; and then the thing came into the kitchen, opening and shutting the cupboards, as if 'twas looking for something ; so I says to myself, Drat them girls, they didn't put his slippers ready for him ! and I throws on my dress to run down stairs. When first I went into the kitchen, I could see nothing ; but presently, whew—w ! something flies past me like the wind, and I followed it into the dining-room, and it rushed past again through the door—something white it was. I was dreadfully frightened, and stood still where it had been, but I didn't see or hear anything more ; and after a bit, I went through the passage and the kitchen to look, but there was nothing, and then I went back to bed, but never to sleep, till I heard Master come in this morning."

I thought it very odd that she and I should have heard exactly the same thing ; so next time I saw Mr. Falconer, our old Vicar, I told him, and he promised to come over to Westdown, and hear all about it. My old lady told him her story, and he made her shew him the exact spots in the kitchen and in the dining-room, where the ghost passed her, and then took out a book and said some Latin prayers in each place. Then he said to me.

"I suppose you'll all be in church next Sunday ? "

I said "yes, of course, unless we were ill."

"You must also stay for the Holy Communion," said he ; "and I do not think that spirit will ever trouble you again, for I have read that if prayers are said in a place where an unquiet spirit wanders, and the heads of the family it troubles receive the Holy Communion on the next opportunity afterwards, it will leave them in peace."

We went to Church as he bade us, and, do you know, from that day to this, the ghost has never been heard.

"What an interesting ghost story," said Alice ; "it is the first I have ever heard from an eye-witness ; or, in your case, one ought to say, an *ear*-witness."

"And fancy the laying of the ghost," put in Emmie.

"Mr. Falconer repeating his Latin prayers ! "

"He was a dear old man," said Mrs. Danvers. "I wish you could have seen him. He was very good to the children, and they were so fond of him."

"Have you got a cup of tea for me, Emmie," asked a voice from the shadow under the minstrel gallery. And Mr. Bellew, in shooting costume, walked into the midst of our fireside circle.

"You home, Mr. Bellew," said Mrs. Danvers, springing up. "Here havé I been telling ghost stories by the fire ; quite forgetting that hungry mortals were coming home to supper. Come, Norah, we must run all the way, or papa will be tired of waiting for us."

"And the singers, mother," said the little girl. "We shall hear the carols to-night ! "

So they left us, and the quaint tapestry curtains were drawn over the windows, and the old hall was lighted for

the evening. After supper, the children began to ask when the singing would begin, and Princess insisted on retiring behind the tapestry, to peer through the window, that she might watch for the coming of the singers. Her little brother had a sudden inspiration.

"Oh, mama! do let me take pussy to the window; because you said she could find mice in the dark, and I'm sure she can see the people."

In due time their patience was rewarded. There was a faint stir in the court outside, and then the following carol, in excellent time and tune—a good specimen of the musical genius of Cornwall.

Hark, the music of the cherubs,
Sweetly bursting from on high,
And the choir of flaming seraphs,
Telling wonders from the sky.

See the frightened shepherds gazing
On the bright celestial train,
While each dazzling glory blazing,
Raise each manful, wakeful strain.

Cease your fears, the joyful story,
"Unto you is born a child;
Through His name, the Lord of glory,
God to men is reconciled.

Now He leaves His blissful station,
Now descends with men to dwell,
Robes himself with incarnation,
And subdues the powers of hell.

Glory be to God the Father,
Glory be to God the Son,
Glory to the Lamb for ever,
The eternal Three in One.

At the last verse Mr. Bellew threw open the hall door, and invited the musicians to enter. Two or three women, wrapped up in picturesque shawls, and about a dozen men, some singing, some playing various instruments.

"A merry Christmas to you, ladies and gentlemen," said the oldest among them, and we echoed the cordial wish.

A chair was brought for the leader of the party—a man of many callings, for he played a violincello, sang bass, and gave out the first line of every verse, as a word of command to his little company.

They lent us a book of words, and Alice and I found many an old friend, in an older dress than we had known, amongst the carols it contained. Grammar and orthography were alike traditional throughout the collection. One with a Latin chorus, "*Venite adoremus dominum,*" filled us with wonder, and in an interval, allowed for the enjoyment of ale and cakes, we asked that it might be sung.

"We don't sing that very often, ma'am," was the answer, "for those that don't understand it laugh at the words."

"The laughing should be on the other side," said I. "You understand it, and they don't. Do sing it to us, for we shouldn't think of laughing."

There was something sympathetic in the Christmas music sung in that old hall by the group of village musicians under the minstrel gallery; some of the faces bore an unmistakable stamp of old ancestry; it was no surprise to hear that their names could be traced back three hundred years in the parish records, and they answered us with a real courtesy, not often surpassed, and very often unequalled amongst those of gentle birth.

"Your Cornish people have the most wonderful manners," said Alice to our host.

"Haven't they?" said he. "Emmie was lost in admiration when we came down here first."

We were very sorry when the farewell verse brought our Christmas Eve pleasure to a close.

My song is done, I must be gone,
Come stay no longer here,
God bless you all, both great and small,
And send you a joyful year.





LOVE'S APPEAL.

BY DR. W. C. BENNETT,

Author of "Songs for Sailors," &c., &c.

TOUCH her, touch her not, Decay ;
Be she holy, Time, to thee ;
Let the ages fleet away
Yet her beauty changeless be ;
For but once such perfect charms
To our awed eyes can be given ;
Such a blue gaze age disarms ;
She is not of Earth, but Heaven ;
Oh, ye fateful Sisters Three,
Leave her ever thus to me !

Or if ye, who shew no ruth,
Dare her perfect charm to mar,
If ye from her steal sweet youth,
She most fair of things that are,
Memory, I cry to thee,
Hear ! in pity heed my cry !
In my fancy, let her be
As she is eternally !
Changeless let her ever be
In my love and dreams to me !



MY RIVAL.

By J. SIDNEY TOMKINS.

Author of "The Haunted Organ," "Occasional Lectures," &c.

OLONEL CRAWFORD was in love with Rose Haughton—there could not be the slightest doubt about it. He ogled her across the table at lunch and dinner (breakfast he was never down in time for)—he accompanied her on horseback, albeit, strange to say, he was not a good rider, and suffered many a fall through his awkwardness and inexperience—he visited all the old women in the parish with her, and ridiculed them as “antiquated females” to us in the smoking-room afterwards—he sat by her side and gazed into her face while she sang at the piano, and applauded her vigourously at the end of each song. In one word, he behaved in every respect like a lover who adores his mistress, but who has not yet summoned up enough courage to propose.

Rose Haughton was the daughter of a poor infantry officer, who, on his deathbed, besought my father to take care of his motherless and now orphan child. So, when he had followed the body of Captain Haughton to the grave, my father brought the friendless little girl to his home, and ever since that day Rose had grown up, and been treated as one of the family.

My father, Mr. Grant, had been a solicitor, and when he had made what he considered enough money, he took a house near the estate of Colonel Crawford, with whom he had some slight acquaintance. That gallant officer's estate

was not a large one, as it consisted only of forty acres of the poorest land in the county, whereon he had erected a cottage—house it could not be called. A dirty-white stone wall separated the garden from the road—“made it snug and private,” the Colonel said. The cottage had a greenish-yellow look, as if it was subject to incipient jaundice—“has a touch of the tawny like himself,” the owner said. And in that he was not far wrong. The gallant Colonel’s residence in India had not improved his good looks. His complexion resembled that of a cheese more than anything else. He had very small dark eyes; the minuteness of his nose was more than compensated for by the immense size of his mouth, which, when open, disclosed the largest and yellowest teeth I have ever seen. As to his stature, the Colonel was decidedly short—Rose looked down upon him physically as well as mentally. In stoutness he bore off the palm from everyone in the parish, including the butcher. His taste in costume was decidedly peculiar; he affected a suit, composed entirely of cloth, the colour of a policeman’s uniform. His ordinary coat was devoid of anything resembling a tail—it was, in fact, neither more nor less than a boy’s round jacket, made just large enough to suit its wearer’s capacious form—he always wore it open, winter and summer, he said he preferred it that way; but everybody knew that the slightest attempt to button it, would invariably slit it all the way up the back. Out-of-doors he wore a diminutive straw hat, so small, in fact, that he found it necessary to fasten it on with a piece of elastic, passing under his chin. Such was the man who aspired to marry pretty Rose Haughton!

For some months after Colonel Crawford first fell in love with Rose, his admiration was only manifested in the manner I have already mentioned. During that time he contented himself with playing round the bait; but at last he prepared to swallow it—if he could. One morning, after breakfast, my father, with a very important air, called Rose into his study. She obeyed, evidently with an inkling of what was in store for her. Her account of the affair, as told to us afterwards, was as follows:—“When I entered

the room, Mr. Grant placed a chair for me, and told me to sit down. I did so, and then he said : ‘Miss Haughton, I have unfeigned pleasure in imparting to you the fact that Colonel Crawford’—at this point, the scraping of a chair, and a subdued scuffling of feet on the floor, behind one of the curtains, made me aware of the fact that the gallant Colonel himself was in the room, although I could see nothing of him from where I sat. Presently, Mr. Grant continued :

‘I consider it a very great favour that a celebrated officer—one who has held a high post in the military service, and a man—a gentleman worthy in every respect of your esteem and affection, should have done both you and me the very great honour of proposing to accept you as his wife. When I received you as a ward from your father’s hands, nothing was farther from my thoughts (I thought I distinguished a suppressed chuckle from the Colonel at this vile pun) than the expectation that so estimable a man as my friend Crawford would—er—would ever think—er—hum —think of marrying you.’ My father had evidently composed this speech before-hand, but his memory failing him he had recourse to impromptu oratory. ‘I am sure you can have no possible objection to Colonel Crawford for a husband ; he possesses a house a convenient distance from mine, an estate which, though small, is in every respect —er—er—an admirable one, and—and—in short I very much wish to see you and him joined together in matrimony.’ Mr. Grant walked across the room to the window, I suppose to coax out the bashful colonel, but I didn’t wait to see, for as soon as his back was turned, I rushed out of the room.”

So half-laughing, half-crying, she told us her story, and then we consulted as to what we should do. “We,” consisted of Rose, my two brothers, and myself. I was sure that if we could hit upon some plan for so annoying Colonel Crawford that he retired from the combat, I could count upon my brothers, Harry and Frank, to do their best to carry it out. Rose, of course, cordially detested her lover (as, indeed, what girl would not ?) but she, poor child, did not think it right to go against her guardian’s wishes so

much as to flatly refuse to marry the Colonel, but if the project could be given up by any other means, she would be only too glad. Expostulation with my father, we knew, would be of no use, and Rose was too proud to entreat the Colonel to give up his object. The only course left was stratagem—this we determined to try.

That day when we were assembled at lunch, my father from the head of the table, openly requested Colonel Crawford to take his seat by Rose's side, and then announced to us all, including the servants, that Colonel Crawford had at his (my father's) special request, taken up his abode at his house.

"My friend," he continued, "has formally demanded the hand of Miss Rose Haughton in marriage—er. For these and all other mercies——"

Bump!

Colonel Crawford was in the habit of seating himself at the table before the grace was half over, but on this occasion his chair had been removed from under him, and down he came on the floor with a crash that shook the room. My father looked at him with an expression half puzzled, half reproachful. The fallen hero slowly picked himself up, and then, holding the chair tight with both hands, cautiously lowered himself into it. But at the end of lunch he found it as difficult to rise as it had been to sit down. His chair had been plentifully bestrewed with cobbler's-wax. At last, after a mighty effort, he rose, with a sound of tearing cloth—the seat of his trousers remained firmly fixed to the chair. With a lugubrious expression, he sidled out of the room, keeping his back turned from us all as if royalty had been in the room. My father followed him, after darting a look of perplexed anger at us. Presently we heard the Colonel enter his room. Harry softly removed his shoes, and creeping upstairs, tied a piece of thick string to the door-handle, and the other end round a large cabinet, behind which he and I then concealed ourselves. Presently the handle was turned with some difficulty, but the door would not move. The Colonel turned the key first one way and then the other, and gave a second try, but in vain. Then

we heard him go to the window and open it. But there was no means of getting out of the difficulty in that direction. The distance down to the ground was too high to drop, even if he could have got his portly person through the window, which I very much doubt. He crossed the room and tried the door again, but with the same result as before. Then came a great sigh.

Now we thought he would begin to shout for assistance, but he did not. He had more perseverance and pride than we gave him credit for. It would be undignified for the "hero of a hundred fights" to call for help, to get out of a room of which the door was fastened. After a short pause he again turned the handle, and pulled. This time the cabinet moved a little, and the door opened just enough to shew a small chink of light. The Colonel first put one eye and then the other to the opening, and peeped out. Probably some glimmering of the case dawned upon him, for, with a second sigh, he applied himself again to the task. Gradually, with a harsh, grating noise, the cabinet moved along, until the door was as wide open as it could go. He cut the string, and then surveyed the obstacle, which completely barred his exit; he tried to push it away, but the more he pushed on one side of the cabinet we pushed on the other. We could hear him puffing and panting in the midst of his exertions, whilst it was all we could do to prevent ourselves bursting out laughing. After several ineffectual attempts, he rested a while. Then he essayed to clamber up the side; we could hear him demolishing the paint as his huge boots scraped up and down; but he was making steady progress all the time. At last he placed his hands on the top ledge just over our heads, as we crouched down behind. Immediately, Harry smote him sharply over the knuckles with his shoes. The result was a suppressd oath, and a heavy tumble. We imagined that some damage had happened to the prostrate warrior, for we did not hear him rise for some few minutes. We were inclined to believe, from the sounds which we heard, that he remained sitting on the floor, rubbing some part of himself. At last we got tired of watching for him,

and were creeping off, when we heard him call out : " I say, take that thing away." We crept away as fast and silently as we could. " I say," he shouted after us ; " I know who you are, its Master Harry. I'll tell your father of this, sir."

" Whew ! " exclaimed my brother ; " wont father be in a rage if he hears this."

" Never mind," I replied ; " I'll bear all the blame."

We went down stairs, and I had almost forgotten the occurrence, when I was startled by a thundering crash in the upper regions, as if the roof had fallen in bodily. I ran up stairs, half guessing what had caused the disturbance. Colonel Crawford lay flat on his back just outside his room ; his arms stretched over his head, and fastened to the ground by the cabinet, which had fallen flat down, and lay across his fingers. My father and the man-servant were trying to raise the cabinet ; but, somehow or other, John Thomas's end was always slipping and falling again across the prostrate hero's digits. At last he was freed from his bulky incumbrance, and, with some difficulty, rose to his feet. A very sorry figure he presented. His back was covered with dust ; his waistcoat was split open, and most of the buttons were off ; there was a large scratch down one side of his face, while his hands were terribly bruised and scratched. We never heard for certain how this catastrophe had happened ; but I imagine that when he heard us depart, he had again attempted to climb over the incumbrance ; but when it came to pulling his body over the top, the lower and biggest portion thereof would not easily pass between the top of the doorway and that of the cabinet ; and, in his desparate struggles, he had thrown the latter down, and himself with it. My father followed him into his room to condole with him, and to hear how it had happeaed ; while we explained the occurrence to Rose. Her kind heart sympathized with the unlucky Colonel, and, in the midst of her laughter, she implored us not to use such severe measures as that to gain our object ; but my brothers and I unanimously refused to make any such promise. I must confess I felt some doubts, if not fears, as to what my father would say

or do, if Colonel Crawford were to tell him all. My fears were not without some foundation, for my father gave me a long lecture on shewing proper respect to my superiors. In reply, I told him flatly I did not call Colonel Crawford my superior in any respect, except, perhaps, age, and of that I was rather doubtful; for, owing to the Colonel's bad arithmetic, and wish to make himself out as young as possible, his age was wonderfully elastic. A young spinster's of forty was nothing in comparison. My father also gave Harry a sound flogging for his share in the day's work. Rose's sympathy was now transferred from Colonel Crawford to Harry, whom she considered a martyr, or rather a confessor, for her sake; and, really, when I saw the kisses and condolences she bestowed upon the little fellow, I almost wished my father had given me a thrashing—Ah, well! I'm not quite so sure about that after all.

But Colonel Crawford's troubles were not yet over. His recent adventure had so spoiled that objectionable blue suit that he made his appearance at tea in a pair of trousers lent him by my father, very much too long, and so tight that the upper part of his legs resembled those of a very fat ballet dancer, if there is such a thing in existence. His coat—also a loan—was one of those light yellow-green waterproofs, which did not render his appearance either martial or attractive.

During the evening he asked for a little music, and when Rose sat down to the piano, he took up his post by her side, as was his wont. Hardly had the first notes of "Annie Laurie" arisen, when the lid of the box, on which the Colonel sat, suddenly gave way, and in that gallant officer went. It was a pretty deep box, and so nothing could be seen of its occupant but the top of his head and the soles of his shoes. With some difficulty he was extricated, but he continued his campaign no more that evening. He retired to the furthest corner of the room, and there he sulked and rubbed his seat of honour and his elbows in silence. He was evidently beginning to think that his love-making would cost him rather dear at this rate.

Numberless were the tricks we practised upon him during

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the next month. We mixed gunpowder in his tobacco, and once he thereby singed his moustache half off; we made him apple-pie beds; we sewed up the legs of his trousers and the arms of his jackets; we emptied buckets of water upon him. Henry had a special grudge against him, and did his best to pay it off. We did all we could to lower our father's opinion of him. The Colonel had a habit of going to sleep during the sermon; so had my father. Our delight was to push the Colonel towards my father, so that he slid down upon him, and together they nearly tumbled off the seat two or three times. We also took advantage of his drowsiness in church to kick the panels of the seats, imitating, as well as we could, the knock of the housemaid at home, to make the Colonel say, "Come in!" as he did sometimes.

But it was all of no use. With the exception of occasional visits to London, the Colonel spent every minute of his time that he could by Rose's side. He presented her with splendid jewellery—at one time a bracelet, at another a locket; and these gifts my father ordered her to accept, though much to her disgust. At last, one evening when Rose was out of the room, Colonel Crawford imparted to us the fact that he intended "to make the grand assault to-morrow; he had been laying siege long enough."

To tell the truth, my father did not look very well pleased at this announcement. He had evidently begun to think that there might be a more eligible husband for Rose in this world than the fat, vulgar Colonel. He asked the latter what time he intended to carry out his project.

"During the afternoon, I think," was the reply, "I shall get in enough ammunition at lunch to carry me through, I hope. Don't you get jealous, young fellow," he added, turning to me, "if I succeed; *seniores priores*, you know." I ground my teeth with rage. Presently he remarked, meditatively, "I wonder if this suit will do to do it in. You don't want to put on dress clothes, do you?"

My father thought not.

"Nor kid gloves either?" he asked.

"No;" said my father, "certainly not."

I hastened to inform Rose of the Colonel's project, and to ask her what she intended to do.

"Let him do so, I suppose;" she said, "and get it over."

She sat in silence for some time, with her eyes on the ground.

"What answer shall you give him," I asked, presently.

"I shall say 'no,' of course."

"And if he asks for a reason," I ventured to say.

"Because I don't care in the least for him. Surely that is a sufficient one."

"There might be a better one than that, Rose," I said.

"What?"

"That you are engaged to someone already, darling."

"What do you mean," she said, raising her eyes from the ground; "I'm not engaged to anyone."

"Rose! Rose!" I exclaimed, "don't you see what I mean? Only say you will marry me, and then you can't be made to marry that odious brute, Colonel Crawford; and I'll do everything I possibly can to protect you from him and my father too."

"How can you do that, Tom, you stupid," she said, laughing, though her eyes filled with tears. "You aren't twenty-one yet, and won't be for some time; nor I either."

"Then let us run away together, to-night," I said. Then I went down on my knees and tried to kiss her hand. "Oh, Rose!" I exclaimed; "you don't know how I love you."

"Oh, Tom, don't!" she said. "Surely the Colonel is enough, without you too. Do get up, and leave off. Hush!" she added; "there's someone coming." We could hear the portly tread of Colonel Crawford nearing the door of the room where we were. Guessing his errand, I sprang behind the curtain, determined to remain in the room and see what happened. I somehow felt that I had made a fool of myself, and that he was going to do the same.

The Colonel entered the room, with a very sheepish look in his face. He went up to Rose, who was standing by the fireplace, and remarked—

"It's a very nice night, Miss Rose."

"Oh!" said the latter. This was encouraging. The Colonel evidently found it so, for he remained standing, twirling a ring in his fingers, and gazing furtively round the room, as if he thought there was someone concealed in it. He was evidently not accustomed to proposing to ladies, and had no idea how to begin. Presently he went on—

"It's—it's—something connected with this, Miss Rose," holding up the ring.

"What is, Colonel Crawford?" She evidently enjoyed his discomfiture.

"My—my errand?" he stammered.

"What is your errand?" she said.

"Oh, Miss Rose! do you know what it is to be in love?"

"No," said Rose.

(Alas, poor me! I thought.)

"Oh, Miss Rose!" he went on, "it's something dreadful!"

As he said this, he laid both his great splay hands on his heart—or, rather on his abdomen (he evidently knew nothing of anatomy), and made a mournful grimace.

"Is it anything connected with the stomach-ache?" asked Rose maliciously.

"Oh, no, Miss Rose! it's worse—much worse—than stomach-ache, and tooth-ache, and ear-ache, and all the other aches put together."

"Then it must be bad, Colonel Crawford."

"Oh, Miss Rose, it is! I've got it, Miss Rose; I have, indeed."

(He looked as if he had, certainly.)

After this announcement there was a pause for some moments. Then Rose said—

"What is it like, Colonel Crawford? Supposing you were to sit down and explain your symptoms."

Steadying himself by holding tight to the mantle-piece, the Colonel cautiously lowered himself on to his knees. When he was comfortably down, he spoke.

"Miss Rose, ever since I saw you I felt inclined to marry you. I always loved you. And when it got too bad, I went and asked Mr. Grant if I might, and he said yes. And I should have liked to ask you directly, but I didn't like to—I

mean I didn't want to take you by surprise ; so I thought I'd wait a little, first. And oh, Miss Rose ! I haven't slept at nights for thinking of you—and because they used to make my bed so uncomfortable ; and I've woke up in church and said 'Amen' in the wrong places ; and it was all because I thought of you. And I'm sure all I've gone through on your account from those Grant boys—I haven't a bit of skin on my elbows, nor my shins, either—I think I deserve a little reward for all that—don't you, Miss Rose ? And so, Miss Rose, I've come to place my fate in your hands——"

"I don't want your fate," exclaimed Rose. And bursting away from him as he tried to take her hand, she flew out of the room.

Slowly the Colonel rose, and gazed after her with open mouth, panting violently, for his last speech had been spoken almost in one breath.

Then I came out of my hiding-place. The noise of the curtain moving startled him, and he turned round sharply. I expected he would fly into a violent rage, but he did not. All he said was—

"Oh, Thomas !" (and there were actually tears in his eyes as he spoke), "I never thought of this."

"We must all have our troubles, Colonel," I said. "Of course you can't think of continuing your suit after this."

"Can't I ?" he asked doubtfully. "Doesn't a man ever propose twice ?"

"Never !" said I firmly. "Never twice to the same lady. It is not etiquette. It shews you think she doesn't know her own mind, and that's not at all polite."

(If this was really the case, I intended to do a very rude thing as soon as I left the Colonel.)

The latter gazed at me dubiously. Then came a great sigh.

"Ah, well !" he said at last, "I suppose I must give her up, after all."

Colonel Crawford did not propose a second time to Rose Haughton, but somebody else did, and this time successfully.



A VILLA-NOUS FRIGHT.

A Tale of Two Sillies.

By FRED. J. BURTON,

Author of "Footsteps in the Snow," "Harley Grange," &c.

IT came to pass, in the year eighteen hundred and blank white, in the fifth month, and on one of the days of the month, that my wife, two children, one servant, and myself entered into the occupation of all that commodious and elegantly-furnished suburban villa commonly known as "Hyperion Grange," situate pleasantly in its own grounds "of two acres, three roods, and one perch," as the letting-bills had disclosed to passers-by. The furniture included two conservatories, a dog, a cat, and a gardener to look after the grounds.

By "suburban" must be understood the neighbourhood of London; in fact, just outside 'bus range of the great metropolis. I had been in practice as a surgeon in a northern county; when lo! one very fine day, we had some money left us by a deceased relative, and a very acceptable windfall it was. Now, my wife, though a rather *petite* person as regards height (she might be made to appear a loftier character, perhaps, were I to describe her by inches instead of feet), had the soul of a Boadicea. I firmly believe she would have governed these realms, in spite of her height, in a highly superior manner, had she only possessed the one lucky accident of birth; I, too, should have made an excellent Prince Consort, I doubt not, being of a philosophical

and meek, as well as of a musical nature, if I except that in appearance I am not what is generally styled "handsome"—in fact, far from it, as my wife has several times remarked since marriage.

With such a soul as she possessed, and with an accession of property, it was only natural that my wife should bethink herself of a sphere sufficiently enlarged, in which she might have full range for her powers. My opinion was asked, it is true (N.B.—The money, I may here remark, had fallen to me from one of my own relatives); but I believe I had nothing to do with the proposed removal to town, except the taking leave of my patients, which in process of a short time I was told to perform. I effected the leave-taking accordingly. We evacuated the town, my wife managing everything: the sale, the parting from friends, down to the bottle of new milk for baby on the railway journey up to London. Now this dear little woman had never been in London before; yet such were her resources of mind, such her strength of will, that she entered the Hades of Euston Square Station as elate as if going to Court! I was, as usual, meditative and quiet. I had nursed the rather obstreperous baby, I may say, very much on the road; so my wife and the maid were quite fresh as the porter opened the door. Of course my wife had never seen any of the porters before, nor the station, nor they her; yet somehow she got her luggage lifted out among the first. A something about her induced one sad-looking porter to obey her every behest most servilely. I and the little boy, my elder child, were pre-arranged by her to go in one cab; she, the maid, and baby, to follow close, in another. Each vehicle was laden with our luggage. The porter fastened her in, having first run upon his fingers the number of packages at her command, and then waited, expecting a quiet fee, but all he got was—"Very well; tell the man to drive to Sycamore Square" (where we had temporary lodgings already taken for us by a friend), and off we drove. I do believe her eye awed the cabmen, who, after having struck up a coalition on the question of tariff, had to break up their cabinet very soon and take their legitimate fare. But it occurred to me

afterwards they might have been impressed with the idea that if I were ordered to the assault I must have obeyed, and, being a biggish fellow, they might, perchance, have lost the day. Anyhow, she got her way with the men, and the luggage was all deposited in the hall for a much lower fee than I should have dared to offer. Now, I will say we loved our children dearly; I will also add that my wife had a firm opinion of my sterling qualities as a medical man, and always listened to my remarks on Hygiene with wonderful attention. We had always slept with our windows a little open the year round, yet out of draughts, and we all, including baby, hardly knew what such a thing as a cold was. I think the London atmosphere puzzled her rather, as we sat at tea together that evening: yet she seemed to have thoroughly mastered the subject before bed-time, as evinced by the following sentence to me over my evening paper—

“John, I shall not have the window open to-night.”

“Very well, my love,” was my reply.

The next morning, at breakfast, the metropolitan milk, butter, and bread, &c., all came under her keen cognisance; and her fine, fresh taste discovered innumerable flaws in these comestibles. I believe the “hardness” of the water for washing first set her off in her investigations. She could not live without “soft” water for the purpose of personal ablution (she was the daintiest and tidiest little body in the whole world), nor could she get over the idea that when washing baby (which she always did herself) the water was a failure. Hear this, ye water-troubling wolves of water companies, and accuse not my lamb of a spouse! Still, London was attractive. What could she see in those West-End shops that made her madder than any school-girl. Yet listen, ye wives of England. She looked, yet spoke not, nor yet spent my coin; she came, she saw, yet conquered herself, and, perhaps, only laid plans in future. At least, I could only guess this last from her eye, and her silence. I knew I should learn all when it became fit for me to do so. Model husband, for a model wife! In London lodgings three weeks passed, inclusive of one day at Brighton, to smell the sea, during which period she vanquished, with steady determina-

tion, both Houses of Parliament, Westminster Abbey, St. Paul's, the Monument, the Thames Tunnel, and other lions too numerous to mention, including myself, one after the other. As the fourth week broke I remarked that she pondered gently at times, and asked to look at my morning's newspaper; nay, she even went so far as to keep her eyes glued to the *Times* supplement for twenty minutes together, to the total neglect of her cooled coffee and saddening toast. In about three or four days she asked what sort of places were Baconton Flat, Belham Green, Chipsea Chase, Brambleton Bush, and other suburbanities, famous, as I was already aware, for feminine schools, faint vegetation, and parkless halls, all in a row for miles, interspersed with fossil remains of inns, that of yore, in the old coaching days, did something like business, if you please; and grim old cottages, inhabited by retired old ladies and gentlemen, of a small-cathedral-town sort of aspect, yet without the exactly provincial cockiness of nose, whose progenitors no doubt had left them gently independent, and whose habits were innately those of the raven. The idea was gradually inserted into me that our children were getting quite pale, that the smoke was abominable, the London mansions so many ugly piles of bricks, the streets smelling, the noise insufferable, the misery, mental and physical, that met the eye frightful to live amongst; the eyes of all mankind were merciless, or at least careless, if not offensive. We would live in a suburb, and take our pleasure in London just when we had a mind. We would have a garden; be smokeless; the dear little ones should have proper, if not perfectly pure, air to breathe; we would have proper rain water to wash in; we would bake our own bread; in short, I had to look out for a *rus in urbe*.

In a few days we found the real thing, described at the commencement of this story. On one side of the grounds was a hedge and trees and a shallow, dryish ditch, instead of a wall on the other three sides which separated our property (you see, I say our property, though it was only hired) from that of a much larger house and set of grounds. Ours was certainly a pretty place—Elizabethan in style of archi-

tecture, with lots of rooms of all sorts. One of the conservatories opened into the drawing-room, through a folding-window, and the house struck me as being unsecure somewhat, as this window had no shutter or defence of any kind. However, the place was charming; quite retired; we knew no one, nor did we wish to know any of our neighbours, at all events at first. When I say neighbours, our nearest were a long stone's throw off, and kept out of sight by nice trees. Within ten minutes' walk we had omnibuses to town; a private brougham close by to hire when wanted; a library, a church, an excellent butcher, &c.

Now, this kind of position I felt to be highly genteel and proper and excellent; and so felt my wife. We were actually in London, or perhaps what we wished to be, more correctly speaking, of it. In the Registrar's weekly reports on the Public Health we seldom, if ever, saw a death of the en-demic or epi-demic character chronicled to the disadvantage of our suburb. *En passant*, it had been once thought a good thing by my little helpmate and myself that I should become a physician, and set up in town in the amateur and delicate style one reads of in Warren's "Diary of a Physician. But we had thought the bricks and mortar would be too much for us, especially the little ones. For to call Hyde Park fresh air would have been too complimentary to everything shady concerned, whether natural or artificial, animal or vegetable, including, of course, the Officers of Woods and Forests, Public Improvements, and such like nomenclatures. So we would stay at Hyperion Grange all the best part of the year current, look about us, go to the opera, &c., and really spend less money than if we had stayed at Bundleton Magna, keeping up a professional connection and appearance by means of dinners, equipage, servants, &c. I will say my little woman was a splendid manager, and made me very comfortable. We got a good cook; I had some lovely cigars and light French wines. I read a vast amount of light literature, including the *Lancet*, of course. I must also certainly say we got our villa very cheap altogether; in fact, we were, to all appearance, fortunate in every respect. But thus it is ever through

life. With money in hand, economy can be much better practised than when the income is hardly equal to the expenditure, or from a precarious source.

Who ever heard of the poor man getting hold of such bargains, as a rule, as the rich man? How is this? Perhaps, after all said and done, we don't exactly "love our neighbour as ourself." Money is credit, character, security, and, *ceteris paribus*, certain ascetic moralists to the contrary, productive of a certain amount of happiness. After the few years of drudgery I had had, hospital dispensary, private practice by night and day, how much I revelled in this delicious ease! How I felt I could store my mind afresh. How many literary projects and studies, formerly considered as difficult of accomplishment, I set on foot. Truly ease should follow labour, or it is imperfect. Did not the aged prophet of Chelsea once fall into raptures with the state of a political prisoner? Only give him plenty of paper and pens, and blessed time, how grateful indeed would an incarceration be! What an oasis in life's desert! The entities would, uncalled, come again! Diabolic wind-bags would, for a kindly gaol period, become incontinently flabby, and otherwise shut up in the Batho-Memphic antiquities, and these "latter days" would be all true days, as they should be, and have no night at all sayeth Dryasdust!

The contrast of turmoil past with present repose can make a prison, it seems, then, even a paradise for the mind! How much more so, then, when imprisoned in Hyperion Grange! We were proud of our Standard roses; we loved our plants; we tended the beds of annuals tenderly; we soothed the gravel walks into great complacency of aspect; the grass we turned into velvet. We had a large Swiss summer-house, where we took tea, and my charming Gloriana (*mia sposa*) mended my linen. Baby toddled and tumbled and crowded on the lawn with intensest of infantile felicity. My boy, now five years old, played at single wicket with me until he got quite into condition, and as muscular as a monkey. His intelligence, too, became wonderfully exalted since his last birthday but one, which, happening at Christmas time, caused him, in the first place, to be informed that

Christmas-day was our Saviour's birthday; and secondly, to enunciate an interrogatory that made us smile. "Dieu, I s'pose" (naming the Holy Name) "had p'um pudden on His berfday, had He, mamma?" Such was our state of life! unalloyed contentment hand-in-hand, with Pope's health, peace, and competence. "*Ille angulus ridet mihi prater omnes.*"

Yet, with all our joys, Hyperian Grange has left an undying memory in my soul of my having, whilst there, been "metaphysically" turned into a hare! of, for the nonce, having had my nervous system completely upset; my precious character as a man horribly blasted to my grievous disadvantage in the eyes of at least three women! of having ineffaceably charged myself, by my own doing, too, at a mature period of life, with an irremissible stain of poltroonery!

Our "furnished" dog was a frightful-looking animal. It would be venturesome in me in attempting to state his breeding. Occasionally, however, we got a view of his eyes; but at times it was difficult to ascertain which was the anterior, and which the reverse part of his canine frame. All I know is, that he was considered "fashionable." He was a "skye" something or other. This hirsute portion of our furniture had managed in the general felicity of our mansion to secure what many a "used up" Emperor 'ere this had despaired of, viz., "a new pleasure." It consisted of apparently first becoming a ball, and then launching his thus transformed corpus at my boy's lower limbs, and upsetting the whole juvenile fabric, with much glee on both sides. The cat was a black one; and the feud between "Topsy" and "Old Nick" was both chronic and acute at the same time. Spurn not, dear reader, the trite description I am giving of our menage; for it is meet and right that everything hinging on my story should be duly put before you. Even *my* rose trees, *my* grass-plots, *my* gravel walks, *my* beds, *my* conservatories, *my* wife, *my* domestic quadrupeds have, all and singular, their full significance in my story.

Surely "house-taking" is the twin science to "house-keeping," and both require much art, so to speak, as each

possesses certain subtleties appertaining to Science and Art. They are neither of them a branch of education at once attainable with the mere existing desire for information—*Experientia* does it. If Housekeeping has its economy, its domestic and public aspects, its reserves, its regime, and what not, so Housekeeping has its masks, its false "premises," its special allurements to false conclusions, and its pitfalls for the unwary student in no ordinary degree!

There is a *Pons asinorum* to most tracts of knowledge, and rare indeed is it to find even the finished scholar that hath not halted sometime thereon! Now, Hyperion Grange, though built on arches, was far from being set upon a hill. In fact, Middlesex had no more horizontal or flatter portion of its plateau than that upon which this mansion was situated. In truth, at times, we found our garden, kitchen, and certain surrounding offices and hereditaments undeniably damp. In technical phrase, though assured on the contrary by the "agent," our house seemed to have no fall. Could this by any possibility be a reason for an inordinate, yet evidently indigenous supply in the article of FROGS? Yet, in sooth, our garden at times was a veritable Kingdom of Batrachia! My Gloriana at first pursuing the chase with her natural vigour, tongs in hand, had to yield to the inevitable fate of the overmatched, 'ere one moon had passed, and was fain to rest contented with merely clearing a sufficient space for her infant's exercising ground, instead of carrying on a war à *outrance* over the whole estate.

Perhaps the agent knew little enough about the frogs. He must have known, however, a good deal more about the drains. Indeed, he could sketch out the whole sub-net work with a degree of minuteness quite surprising. Yet, after all, cook was perpetually anathematising "them rats," who, it seemed, every now and then defeated the architect's designs sadly, by erecting barricades of their own within some undiscoverable distance of the sink gratings, producing a series of varied nuisances, disastrous to cook's peace of mind; and the general felicity of her *cuisine*. The cat, being merley a calm looker on, was of no use. The dog was wont occasionally to bark sufficiently loud at the entrance gates of Ratdom

to save his dignity, and then retired like a pursuivant disappointed of an answer to his summons. The kitchen floor had to be taken up repeatedly, so had the passages. Apertures had to be *Chevaux de frise*, with a compo of clay and broken glass, and these various processes were next succeeded by a furious underground engagement lasting a few days, which I decided in my own mind as resulting from the mutual attempts at extermination of certain of the now completely imprisoned rodents. Just as cook was about to take leave of us, as she was evidently taking of her cookery, we had a fortunate lull. The Kilkenny tragedy had gone through all its acts, and peace reigned in its stead ; but not for a very long duration. The *Da Capo* movement was persisted in with the tenacity of a country dance. So we at last procured a trap, formidable, but successful. Cook gradually regained her composure and her cookery, and our mutual satisfaction was in a measure restored to us.

Now being rather a nervous man, and withal, ocularly speaking, a short-sighted one, and accustomed to spectacles, *à la* Mr. Ledbury, I was not entirely devoid of apprehension as regarded burglarious attempts on our house. I had three females and two infants to guard. I was exceedingly averse to windy nights which made my hired trees rustle so, that it was impossible to hear any approach of burglars. I frankly own that the Metropolitan Police Reports were anything but balm to my soul. I was not altogether unacquainted with certain specimens of popular light literature, wherein Metropolitan robbery and murder, in the dead of night, were most vividly depicted, accompanied too by most distressingly devised woodcuts, which, when under the eye, however, are so apt to convey the possible fate of any one else but ourselves ! I will not disguise that when returning home alone by the very last 'bus, after an evening spent in London, I was subject to much trepidation, especially on moonless nights, as I sped down the long dark lane, with its only two gas lamps, to my own gate. I would ask myself, "Has the house been entered in my absence ?" Not being accustomed to a key, and as some one invariably sat up late for me I had to ring the rather sonorous gate bell, which, if

not answered soon, became an additional source of apprehension.

I took to fastening the drawing-room door, in lieu of a shutter to the drawing-room conservatory window. I affixed all the bells (some fourteen in number) nightly to the windows, before I could betake me to rest: and somehow I began to detest suburban villas with all my heart. It had been handed down by the agent to us that a policeman promenaded up our lane every hour during the night. I think I remember meeting this ornamental functionary once, on a very dark cold night. He showed no lamp, and never made a sound, until coming suddenly upon him, I commenced the duet of "Who goes there?" He was as much frightened as I was, no doubt, as we were walking on the soft side sward of the lane; and I very seldom saw him again! How he was accustomed to arrange matters with his Inspector I know not. Perchance the Inspector was as equally absent as himself. Let Scotland Yard decide! I began to think I had sacrificed a good deal of security of feeling to a sort of medico-maniacal prejudice against the crowded company of my fellow creatures, and its carbon emanations. In my hatred of actual London, I had positively, no doubt, gone too far from it, and in my haste to revel in the "Wild gems of nature," the sweet nurselings of spring, such as garden glossy buttercups, cowslips delicately pale, purple violets, gay crocuses, meek-eyed daisies, and yellow primroses, not to speak of the floral vendibles from Covent Garden, I had let myself in for a chronic dread, only to be assuaged by perpetual moonlight, or by retaining a posse of male defenders accustomed to deadly combat—both impossibilities. It may not be considered by many an additional pang, perhaps, when I state that my spouse said very little in answer to my unmanly remarks and timid apprehensions. She only begged me not to be "absurd." Yet, for all that, I thought more than once I caught the little woman awake listening at nights, when the wind was up and the moon down. Pursuing a course of Italian opera, I was glad of the excuse for going to the expense of a Hansom cab (which my little son, in his provincial darkness and ignorance

at first, was wont to style a "big perambulator"), and of thus being landed at my own gate; and I tardily confess I never at any time was quite so fearful when I had my wife with me as when alone! (I leave the reason why to metaphysicians). Yes! this long, dark lane was an inveterate nuisance, and produced a chill on the mind not too easily eradicated; so much are certain fine natures the undeniable creatures of nervous impressions! At last—

One cold but lovely moonlight night, as I was suffering under a severe "crying" cold, I retired to bed early, after having put my feet in hot water, and hot water, with something else in it, into my interior as well, in order to "drive out" my malady, as the saying is. I had investigated the state of all the alarm bells from one of the servants, and I had reason to suppose the house in a state of security, in spite of my total want of firearms, and inability to use them if I had had them. The house had become wrapped in slumber, and I, myself, must just have been entering my third hour of repose, when my diaphoretic dreamings were interrupted by a series of uncomfortable nudges on the part of my wife, which soon made me fully awake. The moon, though not just now of the brightest, was shining into our room through the window opposite the foot of our bed; and for some reason or other the blind was up. On two sides of the house extended the garden, on to which our window looked. On the other two was a lengthened rectangular enclosure or yard, fenced in by trellis work, on to which the kitchen and offices opened. Within this our dog "Nick" had the nocturnal privilege of roaming, and barking, when so pleasantly inclined, just under the servants' bedroom windows. Now, Master Nick, though not an affable dog mostly, or elegant to look at, possessed much canine intelligence, and was an excellent house dog. I believe his dog-wit extended to a complete knowledge of every footprint accustomed to pass along the enclosure of our grounds, and thus he never gave himself the trouble of barking except at undeniably strange footsteps. In fact, we knew this so certainly to be his rule, that any continued barking, more especially at night, became an especial symptom of something strange being in the

immediate neighbourhood of our domain. I had no sooner awoke from my slumbers than I at once heard the reiterated and savagely sustained barks of our dog, from whose alternate advancings and retreatings we ascertained that his patrol extended over the whole run of the two enclosed sides of the house.

This continued incessantly for full a quarter of an hour, when I was stung by the reproachful commands of my wife into a trembling submission, and obliged to forsake my couch, all influenza and perspiration though I was, in order to investigate the cause of this disturbance. The moon became clouded as I emerged from the comfortable bed-clothes. Yet, methought it best not to light a candle, for several reasons, one of which may have been that I didn't quite relish the idea of illuminating my surpliced carcase as a possible target for interrupted burglars. For the life of me, I could not find my nether garments, nor my slippers. I began to shiver in the cold gloom. The dog continued his barkings with increased intensity of exacerbation, and seemed mad with excitement. We could hear, but not see him, vainly endeavouring to pull down the trellis work that enclosed him, and we thought it better not to open the window and look out. Now, our cook we did not consider a brave woman by any means, but she made no outcry, though she must have been awoke by this; and we heard no sound from the nurse, who slept in another room at the end of a corridor, with my little boy. We could see nothing from our window calculated to excite any attention. A few slight articles of female apparel, laid out to bleach on the sward and shrubs, moved not. There seemed nothing suspicious about the summer-house, just in front of us, twenty yards off. My wife and I were resolving ourselves into a whispering committee, when all at once we heard a loud noise downstairs, as it were, of heavy footsteps, apparently in the hall, dragging along some heavy weight, that clanked with an echo. We heard it distinctly rattle down the two steps that led to the kitchen, store rooms, &c.; and a voice or two, now whispering, or saying "Hush!" and now breaking into a sort of falsetto crack of voice, in the effort, as it were,

speak forcibly, yet so as not to be heard. It all at once struck me, "Have we got this house so cheaply because it has the character of being 'haunted?'" and is this an attempt by pseudo ghostly burglars to frighten the inmates, and make them leave it empty? I was just becoming somewhat reassured as regarded the probability of our midnight murder, and was groping about still for my "inexplicables," when, on getting near the closed bed-room door, to my horror I distinctly heard fingers feeling along the panels, as if in an endeavour to find the handle of the door. My wife, by this time was keeping watch at the window, and, without herself being seen, had found a convenient aperture for observation. I could just hear her faintly whisper across the room that a habit shirt of her own had that moment been taken, or shaken, off one of the shrubs near the summer-house; but she could not see whether there were more than one or two persons on the premises. I contrived to cross the room silently, and mention that some one was trying our door. In an instant she whispered that the little bolt was fastened all right, and, further, I was delighted at hearing her state that the servants were directed always to bolt their doors, and that such was no doubt the case to-night. We heard our door-handle turned, and the door gently pushed against, while we stood in dead silence, when, just at that moment, there was an increased noise downstairs, and a great breakage of glass, as we both seemed to think in the drawing-room.

"Oh, my hyacinth glasses!" whispered my intrepid Gloriana. A simultaneous and rapid movement and departure of muffled human steps from our bed-room door took place. Old Nick's continued barking hindered us from deciding the direction exactly. We now gladly beheld the moon showing signs of coming brightness before long, yet everything was in comparative darkness as yet. My brave Gloriana, shivering as she was, bade me get out of the room quietly, and see if the nurse and our little boy were secure in their own apartment. I loved my boy very much, of course, devoid of breeches though I was, and also catching a fresh supply of influenza; but I got the door opened very

quietly by degrees, and on listening, I thought I could hear nothing except Nick's barking. I slid silently, yet rapidly, along the corridor towards the door I was aiming at, when I suddenly came with a violent concussion against a heavily-built human being. We both went down—I myself partly through fright, I must confess. My antagonist was not nearly so tall as myself I at once divined, from my slightly-raised arm having come heavily on his face. I say his face, because I thought, of course, it was a man. But this idea was instantly dispelled by the horrific shriek of a female voice, succeeded by cries of "Murder! Spare me!" but not until, in my own fright, I had lifted up my own voice in a most unearthly key, which entirely disguised my own naturally gentle tones, and had roared out—

"Hah! Scoundrel! Would you! Keep off me! I'm armed! Yield!" and such like.

The hubbub of the two voices abating, I discovered that I had courageously upset, and was about to wreak my vengeance on, my own cook! I at once helped the buxom, yet pallid maiden, on to her feet, at first revealing my own identity. My wife had joined us by this time, and we all stood shivering and whispering in a council of War and Woe as to the plan to be pursued. We first quickly ascertained that our boy was locked safe in his room, and we whispered courage to the maid through the key-hole. All this time the dog was barking in a frantic manner, and we repeatedly heard mutterings, and heavy footsteps, and clankings down stairs. The robbers must be deciding upon coming upstairs soon, we felt convinced. They seemed to be in the dark though, as they kept every now and then stumbling against articles of furniture. Two kitchen chairs were thrown down noisily, and many plates and dishes seemed to be broken wantonly. We felt almost sure, now, that an entrance had been effected through the drawing-room conservatory by removing some glass, and that this, no doubt, had set off the dog in the first instance, or else why did he agitate the trellis work with such violence?

So we three retreated to our nuptial bedroom. The women placed themselves on guard at the window, I at the

door, having at last succeeded in getting into a pair of trousers. In a few moments we thought the moon would be making her appearance, from the indications of the sky. My wife and cook then said they thought they saw one or two men moving about the summer-house, and could distinctly hear the tread of their heavy boots. The aforesaid bleaching linen was every now and then shaken suddenly, as if the shrubs they were on were being brushed against or pulled roughly. The noise had ceased downstairs entirely; so, locking our door, and finding my dressing gown and spectacles, I joined the sentinels at the window. Yes! there were two men evidently standing or sitting a little distance from one another. We could see them distinctly! They must be discussing what to do next, as we tenants had been aroused, and one waved his arm now and then, and the other moved his hand occasionally, and seemed to be pulling off some leaves from the shrubs whilst the conversation was proceeding. We thought the dog would have torn down his barricade with his teeth, but the men seemed to take no notice of him whatever. We still watched and watched. The moon was beginning to emerge from the fleecy clouds. Another instant, and she came calmly sailing forth in all her beauty and brightness, thus giving us a chance of clearly disclosing the objects of our dread. There was a moment of suspense! But immediately succeeded by an involuntary burst of hysterical laughter from my almost choking Gloriana. She was holding her side with one hand, and her other she held to her mouth, as she looked at me with my specs on to see how I took it. Naturally, as a husband and medical man, I was rushing to support her, thinking the fright had been too much for her, that she was "giving way" at last, and about to drop." Instantaneous desires for sal volatile and brandy (these, alas for cowardly me! downstairs, closeted and locked in the dining room), and affectionate grief for my darling swept o'er my distraught brain, when she quickly subsided into a calm quiver of suppressed cachinnation, almost too much for my feelings. She leaned against the window corner, and seemed quite overcome, but still not entirely sinking on to the floor. I

cast my spectacled eyes through the window, and saw—one very fine light-coloured grey donkey, with a white nose, nibbling the arbutus bush close to the summer-house.

The waving tail and hinder portion of another and a darker donkey, backing tail foremost out of it ; both animals utterly disregardful of Nick, or indeed anything but their own asinine calmness. Philosophic ratiocination at once relieved me of fear, either for myself or my gleeful spouse. The wagging tail of my darker brother below was the dispositive arm of one robber. The white nose of his blonde ally in "Villa"-ny was the human hand I had distinctly seen spoiling my bushes.

What "gabies" we have been, said my wife, in a bantering tone (I suppose she meant me, especially !). Even Cookey sniggered. She had seen, too ! The tension of brain was gone in my own case ; and as I settled my specs afresh even my courage returned, and I was fain to smile. Cook ran away as if all at once overtaken by sudden modesty at being seen in her night attire ; and we next opened the window for a survey. We saw undeniable havoc below us. A large stand, some seven feet high, laden with flower-pots, was overturned, and the breakage was most forlorn. Nick held his row when he heard our voices, and just on round the corner walked the policeman, who 'oped the "clatter" had not alarmed us.

"Oh, dear, no !" said my wife, with a chuckle.

He told us that the two donkeys belonged to the paddock of our neighbour, and they had got through a thin part of the hedge, and across a shallow part of the dry ditch. We could not sleep much that night, so we went down to look after the damage, telling our policeman we would let him in.

"Hullo !" cried I "the drawing-room door is open ! It ought to be locked."

"I found it unlocked, sir," said the policeman (who by some means or other had entered the hall) ; "and also the kitchen door, sir."

"Aye," said I, in my wife's hearing, "just the one off-night when I went to bed first, instead of last, as usual ; and no one has looked round in my place."

Having refreshed our nocturnal guardian from the side-

board, he promised to drive the donkeys out of the garden, and to give us a call to-morrow. I then locked up, and we recommenced our shattered slumbers as well as we could.

Oh, the next day's survey! Donkey's feetmarks on almost every bed. They must have been hours at their little innocent game. The tall flower-stand was overturned in the garden, and had, with its superincumbent weight of pots, almost bodily driven in the small conservatory, smashing no end of glass. Even pots had gone through the drawing-room glass door, and lay broken on the floor.

As far as we could gather from the policeman, one of the donkeys had a chained log fastened to its hind leg. He must somehow have got this fast round one of the supports of the stand, when doubtless startled by Old Nick's onslaught, and thus have shaken down the whole affair. The drawing-room door being open, the supposed clanking of ghostly visitants was accounted for. But there were other sounds to account for, which the policeman fully explained. The dog knew him, and after he had got into the garden over the wall, had tried the unlocked kitchen door, and entered the house, he spoke in a hushed voice to quiet him. His boots were heavy, and he ran against a couple of chairs, knocking them over, thus putting the cat into qualms; so she in her turn jumped on to a table on a heap of supper-plates and glass, as yet unwashed, making much havoc. The steps in the hall had been the policeman's, who also on entering the drawing-room had again stumbled against furniture, and kicked some broken glass. He had then gone outside to see the cause of the "row," and had not intended to disturb us by any sign, as we seemed so quiet, until he heard my encounter with Cookey, as above. During the gloom before the re-appearance of the moon, the two interesting marauders had found their way to the summer-house, and he couldn't make head or tail either of the upset flower-stand or of the apparently frightful *duello à la morte* upstairs. In fact he had been puzzled; we had been puzzled; including the donkeys and Nick and the cat, all round, no doubt. We lived for a year or two after this in cosy and benign peace, due precautions having been taken to render us impregnable.

I will only state in conclusion that a mutual wariness on the subject seemed to exist from the day after our fright (I think I can safely say, our fright) between my Gloriana and myself. I had expected sundry allusions to my cowardice on that night, but it seemed I must have had a "rebutting" cause of real complaint that she had not "looked round" after I had gone to bed invalided. We both tacitly respected the weak spots in each other's armour, and went on in peace and prudence. May all other married folks do the same.

ODE.



ARDEN beauty, fairest flower,
Fairest in my lady's bower,
Sweetest of thy lovely race,
Fairest in this fairy place,
Where is she on whom I call,
Flower of flowers, and Queen of all ?
Fair she is, and pure as fair,
Pure as light and heaven's air.

Would you all her beauties trace ?
See her in that lovely place :
Roses blooming ev'rywhere,
Flowers of beauty yet more rare,
Wild flowers growing at her feet,
Flowers above her quite as sweet.
Would you see her ? See her there :
Sweetest flower in Beauty's lair.

Could you, painter, paint her there ;
Paint her dark and glossy hair ;
Could you make her dark eyes speak ;
Paint the bloom upon her cheek ;
Could you tint her ruddy lip,
Give it moisture Love would sip,
Give the play to beauties rife,
Could you, painter, give her life ?



Love-light; a Homely Romance.

By F. ALLEN LAIDLAW,

Author of "Flora," "The Mystery of Manningtree"

CHAPTER I.

TWILIGHT.

I EVERYBODY said, he ought never to have married her.—Ladies said they couldn't visit her.—Gentlemen sneered at him and said, he was a fool and a soft coon. The world's everybody decided that it was a disgraceful affair. I, the old outcast, who am going to relate this little history, have no remark to make in opposition to the world's decision. I am not going to argue the matter with social Podsnaps. I have only to say that the older I get, the more I feel that the modern social world is growing heartlessly selfish, and that modern christians are chiefly remarkable for lack of charity, and for a wonderful aptitude in the "casting of stones."

At the present time, most people are much infected with fanatical theology, hieropathy, and sensational spiritual sentiment ; but of real religion there is far too little, and of practical piety less still. But I am railing and moralising, I must proceed. I dismiss myself in two lines.

I am an old doctor with a professional position. I have seen a great deal of life, and experienced about all that a man can experience. I am of an original turn of mind. I am looked upon as eccentric. If it were not for my professional position, and my skill in physic, I should be a social outcast. Now to my story.

She had been divorced from her first husband. I advised her to take that step. He knew it—I told him of it—he fell in love with her, and he married her, and I am proud of him for doing so. If ever there was a sad case, it was hers.

Women have no chance of experience in life ; they don't knock about and see life as men do. They are the victims of first fancies, and love conquers them at a blow, at least, that which they believe to be love. Captain Shandway was a handsome man ; she had met him at Brighton. He was highly educated, and very agreeable. Education is a vast advantage to a bad man, it enables him to be so completely wicked, and it acts as a cloak to hide his secret vices.

A short courtship served to fan her love, without giving her time to test his worth.

Three months afterwards, she discovered that her husband was a confirmed and habitual drunkard. Poverty, and a ruling desire to gain a rich wife had overruled, for a time, his desire for drink ; but, with renewed ease, the old desire came back, drink regained its mastery over him, and with it his bad tempers, cruel and low bestiality. He was cold and unkind to her ; he was brutal and cruel to her ; he was faithless to her, and, at last, one day he savagely struck her.

I, old Doctor Daysang, had known her father well—I was almost a father to her myself ; I always attended her in illness, and I then stepped in and bade her take advantage of his horrid faithlessness, and separate wholly from him.

After much trouble and much paying away of money, the end was gained.

She was divorced for ever from the being whose nature was so perverted as to render any union with him impossible.

She came to live with me afterwards. She was very ill and very sad, and I was no real company for her. I may say, in regard to myself, that I am bad company for anybody. I am naturally reserved in my temperament, and ever since the great calamity of my life befell me—though now only remembered through the dim distance of forty years—still the calamity of my life, the death of my young wife, after one short year of love and happiness, all merri-

ness and all energy of character have died out of me. I live on, and I do my duty ; but I am a cripple : I have lost the best part of myself—the soul of me lies buried, and the remnant that is left will follow soon now.

It was at this time that I first made the acquaintance of Arthur Garner, a struggling journalist. This acquaintance rapidly ripened into a friendship. A real sympathy there was between us, strange to say, in an old man of 70 and a young man of 30 ; yet so it was. I found in him a wonderful generosity of soul and a marvellous firmness of purpose, combining at once the broadest of all philosophical systems of thought, with the most perfect calmness of intellectual practicability. He was not a visionary. He was not a humbug. His social leaders were startling, but uncontrollable. His success was not great. His thoughts were not sufficiently loose for one section of the community, and not sufficiently bigoted for another. The secret of his marvellous earnestness and wisdom lay in the fact that he had suffered much, and was a man of deep thought and of great passion in his emotional being.

The extent of his sufferings need not be recorded here ; suffice it to say that they were equal to my own, and exceeded those of my new charge, Alice Ward. Enough to say that I had not known him two months before I felt convinced in my own mind that he was the man to make Alice happy, and to whom she could prove a blessing and a joy.

When there is a natural affinity between two feeling souls, and where kindly pity melts the heart, warm love soon lights a flame that can never die while life remains to feed it. I remember, at their first meeting, they seemed silently to be seeing into each other's hearts. A quiet consciousness of subtle sympathy seemed to have lightened the burden of Alice's sorrow, and to have removed the cloud of sadness from her face. I determined to encourage the growth of this feeling between them. I acquainted him with her hard history when he enquired about her sadness. I knew his heart was already interested.

There may have been a certain artfulness in my proceedings, but no meanness : and it was for the good of both

as far as I could see that I acted. But I soon discovered that two such ardent and sincere natures required no prompting from me ; they were intuitively drawn to each other by a common instinct. They both felt the sincerity of their own natures ; they trusted each other. The history of his sufferings was confided to her.

Natures who have suffered, and who have experienced the lighter degrees of human emotion, are fitly prepared for the deeper and lasting affection. They have learnt the value of such emotions as are sincere and satisfying, and the comparative worthlessness of such as are feverish and transitory.

Scarce two months elapsed, ere these two found themselves firmly in the toils of an irrevocable love. Both felt that they were the complement of each other.

I rejoiced to see that my Alice's heart grew lighter, that the smile returned to her face, and the living colour of quickened emotion to her once pallid cheeks.

The third month found Arthur demanding of me permission to offer his life to Alice for ever. He was poor ; but he loved. They both cared only to be happy in each other ; and a humble life with each other was all they looked for. I readily consented. And when they had both fully opened their hearts to each other, I had an intense satisfaction in beholding the divine unselfishness, and the exquisite abandon and tenderness which is the privilege of those who are inspired by the deepest, fondest, and ungrudging love.

The first stage of this my little history concludes with the day of their marriage.

Never, perhaps, were a more perfectly happy couple started on the sacred voyage of married life. Mutually desiring only to please each other, to share all joy and pain, and to help each other through the pass of time, to live their whole lives together in a mutual reciprocity of thought and feeling. Life with all its struggles and cares, seemed only to them like a vast means by which their love was to be proved and strengthened, and every care and trouble, but an excuse for a renewal of tenderness ; what wonder that the

simplicity of their lives begot serene contentment, that the divine all-sufficiency of that ever renewed affection begot a charity in their hearts which only pitied the sneers of an envious, worldly, Vanity Fair, and made their very living an eternity of bliss for them ; for while they lived, they must be happy, knowing their being to be one.

CHAPTER II.

DARKNESS.

THE second stage of my story brings me to a period six months later.

My protégées lived together in two humble, but comfortable rooms. They both refused my offers of assistance, not from false pride, but because experience had taught them that it is happier and better to take the sweet and bitter of life, that it is blasphemous for any to endeavour to secure an extra amount of ease at the expense of the trials of the many, they had learnt that pain gives a zest to pleasure, that true love yearns to share pain as well as pleasure, and that the bliss of a true marriage of happy hearts is to share all life together, for better for worse, for care and for joy, for pain and for delight.

Exactly six months after that date of their marriage, the first cloud appeared in the golden horizon of their gentle lives ; a cloud seen only by one of them, seen by none other, revealed only to one. With streaming eyes, a face drawn rigid with convulsive misery, and a voice surcharged with the agony of a breaking heart ; that cloud was pointed out to my view alone. With a weight ever increasing at my heart I listened, and I looked, and, when I saw, I trembled.

Alice, what thou hast suffered is not enough—more is yet in store for thee. My heart bled for her, and for her husband. She dared not tell him, and half the agony she felt was from the fact that it was the first and only secret she had from him.

“ He was so loving and good to her,” she said.

Could I do anything, could I save her, could I prepare him? I trembled and felt smitten to the heart at the sight of the living agony before me, at the knowledge forced sternly upon me by my professional experience, of the inevitable fatality that was hovering above this good, gentle, loving woman.

In a very, very short time, my knowledge told me, Alice *would be terribly and irrevocably stone blind.*

For some little time past she had found her eyes sadly weak, and that morning a kind of stroke had seized them. And she saw now all things "as in a glass darkly."

She could say nothing to Arthur. And still more than all, that very morning Arthur had been called away upon important journalistic business to the North of England. He would be about a week. It was their first parting, and he was terribly "cut up" about it.

In a few hours he must be starting. Could she tell him all before he left? O! Good God, No! Her heart was breaking. Fear to tell him now. Fear that he would suffer more in the future for a present concealment.

I knew not how to advise. My natural instinct and hers too, said "Speak out the worst at once," but what would be the effect of the revelation upon him? Much depended upon the work he was now about to undertake. A future was open before him, should he successfully accomplish his present mission. It was a crisis in his professional career.

This thought made me silent. She knew my thought, and I knew her heart was racked as mine was. Should he learn what was impending over her, he would throw up all, and never leave her side.

Ill could she spare him. Sadly would she want the tender care of a fond love, and the guidance of a well loved hand in the agony that was to come upon her.

She let him depart without a suspicion of her pain. How tenderly she parted from him. How she trembled. He felt deeply moved to see her so terribly overcome by what he thought to be only excess of emotion at their brief separation. He kissed her very tenderly.

And he knew not; he was gone in ignorance. So often

are we so terribly near the truth in this life, and whether for good or ill we know it not, as chance or fate directs.

As she saw the last of him, a terrible thought struck her brain, and deprived her at once of consciousness and strength.

Then——. I only saw her fall—a heap upon the ground.

Afterwards I learned the thought which had struck her so low. It was this :—

“ When he came back, would she be the same to him in his eyes that she had been?”

CHAPTER III.

LOVE-LIGHT.

THREE days after this she was stone blind. The beautiful, soft, winning blue eyes, were vacant and sightless. The agony she had suffered during those three days is beyond the power of my pen to describe, though my heart feels it most terribly.

They had arranged to correspond briefly every day.

His first letter came hopeful, cheering, and full of endearing expressions and loving thoughts of his absent wife.

And she kissed, and wept over, a letter she could scarcely read. Then came the mockery of a reply—a cheering, hopeful reply.

The second day I had to guide her hand, she could hardly see to form her letters. Long and laborious time produced a fair letter.

The third day we failed. His suspicions were aroused, and in the morning of the fourth day his letter came, asking how it was her hand shook so when she wrote.

The inevitable now met us face to face. She was stone blind, and dumb with grief. I was terribly frightened for her, for a short three months would bring her to her first confinement, we knew, already. Even now there was a terrible thought in her mind concerning that coming event; she had so longed to become a mother.

My course was clear. I must inform him at once, and clearly, of all the circumstances. Briefly and plainly I told him all, and strove to show him how we had left him in ignorance to the last moment, only out of excess of love and anxiety.

After I had written, Alice, who of course knew I had written, lay still, and trembled all over. In vain I argued with her. The horrid doubt rankled in her mind, and suspense half turned her brain. In vain I urged upon her that a man of Arthur's nature and temperament would be sure only to love her more dearly for her affliction, and to treat her with tenfold tenderness. She refused to be comforted; his lips alone could decide. Love must have certainty. And yet the only certainty love can have, is the certainty of simple Faith.

The next morning brought a telegram.

"Will be with you in a few hours. Prepare my darling."

These words, to my mind, spoke volumes. I loved him for the judicious words "my darling." I did prepare Alice, and I took care to observe, pointedly, that he distinctly alluded to her as his darling still.

She said nothing; but I could see she was relieved. All day she was restless and fevered. She feared lest he should be shocked, and then she feared lest he should have lost confidence in her because she had deceived him.

It was late in the evening before the sound of wheels stopping before the door told of his arrival. Alice trembled more violently than ever, and moaned. I rushed from the room, intercepted him in the hall.

"You are sure you understand the worst?"

"Quite. Have you prepared her?"

"I have."

"Then, for God's sake, let me take her to my aching heart. Poor darling. What agony she must have suffered; and what noble self-sacrifice to refrain from telling me. It proves her love. To know that she is blind, is terrible; but to have learned the depth of her love, is to have revealed to me the happiness of my whole life. And doctor: my whole life now means but one thing—Love for her."

"Go to her," I said, as I pressed his hand fervently, "in your hands her happiness is certain."

When he had left the room, I marvelled at the wonderful knowledge he revealed by his conduct; of the subtle delicacies of a woman's feelings. Men so frequently miserably fail to be happy with women, because they do seldom understand them. A hundred little egotisms of thought, egotisms of feeling and manner, serve to dull the sympathy between them and the wives they love. Men generally admire women, but seldom study them.

My protégée was no hero; but I claim for him his distinct merits: he had conquered himself—he had no egotisms. Out of his strong faith in, and admiration for, women, he had studied them, and so could render them justice. After all, how few of us there are who can, in our own hearts, independently do honest justice to our fellow beings.

What passed between them was afterwards briefly told to me.

Her first pain was soon turned to joy, when he clasped her to his breast, and, in eager words of love, showed her how he understood it all. Then, when this new joy was at its height, a fearful thought, which I had guessed to have been rankling in her mind, found vent in these words.

"Arthur, dear, dear Arthur, when our darling baby is born, I shall not see it."

At such moments, between those who love, there is a silent language, which alone can bring comfort and relief. In view of the agonies of life, let us thank God that He has given us—Love.

P.S.—By Alice, dictated to me.

My child has been born. It is healthy and strong. I am happy. I am used to my affliction. I cannot see my husband nor my child. But I know their love for me.

I often tell Arthur I feel most dear, and most at home with him, when nestled to his breast, in the dark hours of the night. And as Arthur replies—

"For those who love, the sacred midnight hours are the happiest in Life."



BAULKED BY A BERRY.

By HORACE L. NICHOLSON.

Author of "Harmonies in Tricolour," "First Fruits," &c., &c.

AMONG the Christmas amusements of my youth, keeping jovial company with snap-dragon, bon-bons, family coach, forfeits, and a hundred-and-one games and pranks, now consigned to the limbo of Old Fashion, was an innocent little performance from which I used to derive much fun and pleasure.

A holly berry spiked with a pin and about three inches of the stem of a clay pipe were the simple implements with which I could amuse myself for hours together. Having placed the point of the pin down the hole of the pipe, I would throw back my head, strike a theatrical attitude, put the other end of the pipe in my mouth, and blow—no roaring blast, but a gentle scientific breeze, that would cause the pinned berry to gyrate in a most comical manner.

I was wont to imagine that this toy was a veritable red-bodied, small-headed, long-legged dancing puppet, that obeyed my bidding, and performed my will. By changing the position of the berry I varied his movements. When right at the head of the pin he would throw his long leg round and round the neck of the pipe at a most alarming rate; when placed in the middle he would execute the most marvellous acrobatic feats, and when tired out would wind up by plumping into rest safe in the centre of the pipe-tube. Continual practice made me so proficient in this art that I was often called upon to give an entertainment to my friends,

when I would put myself in all sorts of queer and uncomfortable positions to blow—lie on my back, stand on my head, blow with my eyes bandaged, with my legs tied, with my hands behind my back ; in fact, as I retrospect now I am afraid, I must often have made myself look excessively ridiculous and foolish on these occasions. I remember once when I was strapped and corded in a style that would have taxed the powers and ingenuity of the Davenport Brothers, lying on my back, with the little red, pot-bellied gentleman capering frantically before my eyes. I gave a little extra strong blow, and lo ! he was gone. Where, nor I, nor any of the watchers could tell. I was undone, and lifted up ; I shook myself, examined every conceivable part of my clothing, but no, there was no sign of the retiring dancer's hiding place. My parents and a few visitors at supper that evening were startled out of their seven senses by a most unearthly yell, and when they had sufficiently recovered to take notice of anything whatever, they saw me with one hand violently rubbing the seat of my trousers, and with the other vigorously shaking a leg of the same garment.

These exertions were rewarded by my seeing drop on to the floor my lost little friend, and all feelings were forgotten in the joy of recovering the inflictor of the pain. How he managed to find his way to that particular part of my anatomy, or why he had such ill-feeling towards me in that quarter are mysteries to me at the present moment. These recollections take me back twenty years of my life, and many Christmases rise up before me, some to taunt, some to cheer, and others to bring regrets and sadness ; for this traditional festive season has lost its glory. The time of gladness, of forgiveness, of good fellowship, of the death of old feuds and the birth of new hopes, of universal love and concord, of feasting and mirth, is now only marked as the harbinger of unpaid bills, of hatred, strife, and uncharitableness, of family disagreements, of drunkenness, vulgarity, and caddism, of empty boards, and bottles of adulterated wine. Ho ! again for a few of the Christmases that linger lovingly in the chambers of my mansion of memory, when Jack Frost came faithfully and did

his duty honestly, giving us icicles on the eaves, snow upon the house tops, slides in the gutters and plenty of safe sport upon the lakes and ponds. I can recall ringing in the new year in the Forest of Dean, when every tree shook his frosted head like an aged patriarch beneath the keen North wind—Switzerland has never presented a more imposing snow spectacle than that. I have danced Sir Roger in the kitchen of a West-Somerset farmer on Christmas night, and enjoyed more honest, hearty glee than I have ever experienced in a West-end drawing-room. I remember Christmases, when the Thames overflowed, and I have thrilled at a five miles right-away skate over the flooded meadows, from Caversham to Pangbourne. I can recall, too, when the Father River was covered with blocks of ice, tons in weight; and I have lain the night through, listening to them crushing against the piers of Barnes Bridge. I have spent Christmas on the Severn, at Sharpness Point; in Paris, under seige, and among scenes of heartrending distress; among the Scotch hills, with Presbyterian severity, and I have Christmased in Normandy, where every tree seems green with mistletoe. But the reference to my holly-berry episode has specially brought to mind a Christmas Eve, nearly ten years ago, when the ambition of my life was crushed, my candle-light effectually extinguished, and my peace of mind upset for quite a fortnight. I was a young man then, and had the conceit to imagine myself good-looking. Turned two and twenty, with a long fashionable moustache, that had cost me many anxious hours, and sundry guineas, to cultivate; a beard, whereon every hair had an allotted place, my perfect figure (in stays), arrayed in the most correct garments that Poole could turn out, I fancied myself, in those days, a thoroughly fascinating fellow.

Christmas found me at Blightham, a quiet little Kentish village, possessing one of the oldest and quaintest Norman churches in England, which stands on a little hill, looking down on the village, nestling snugly in the valley beneath. It is one of the sleepiest, slowest, bumpkinest of villages now; what it was ten years ago, before a line of railway

invaded the privacy, and upset the equanimity of the lethargic inhabitants, can be better imagined than described. There is no county so rich in antiquities, so full of interesting records of olden times, so dear to the archæologist, as Kent; and I love to revel among its treasures of historic lore. The cromlech of Kentish ragstone at Aylesford, the Roman Amphitheatre at Richborough, the Tumulus of Laberius Dorus, Upnor Castle, the Roman remains at Barham Downs, Ightham, and Keston, the Saxon earthworks at Bayford and Dover, the Danish encampments at Blackheath, Kemsby, Swanscombe, Walmer and Milton, the ecclesiastical remains, including old parish churches, abbeys, in state of ruin, fine old castellated mansions, the magnificent hall and gateway of Eltham Palace, all are rich in interesting associations; but none have for me more pleasant memories than Blightham, with its Norman Church, its old Moat House, and its quarried hills, lined with larch and fir.

The Rector of Blightham, who rejoiced in the name of Polehampton—in print. The Honourable and Reverend Roland Polehampton, M.A., was a little fat, round-faced, red-cheeked man, who, by reason of his name, and his figure, was universally known as the Reverend Roley-Poley. His four daughters, whose ages ran down from twenty-three to fifteen, were æsthetic in taste, and high church, by virtue of paternal instruction. But Blightham presented little scope for the development of art outside the ecclesiastical, and the decoration, and adornment of the old church; therefore, upon all feasts, fasts and festivals, were duties that the four Miss Roley-Poley's took upon themselves with great zeal and enthusiasm. They found plenty of willing helpers among the daughters of neighbouring squires and well-to-do farmers, and at Adventtide, Eastertide, Ascensiontide, Whitsuntide, Trinitytide and Christmastide, not to mention the Eves of Saints' days and Holy days, as ordered by the Prayer-Book, the walls of the sanctuary, that had braved the weather for nearly six centuries, echoed the sacred laughter and pious glee of a half-score girlish hearts and voices. On the particular Christmas Eve, that

I remember, the hammering and the chatter were running a very hard race for first place. I was down on a visit to my uncle Gregory, whose hop-gardens and cob-plantations covered over two-hundred Kentish acres. My cousin Kate was lieutenant to the Roley-Poley girls in all their decorative enterprises, and was the *confidante* of the Rector's third daughter, Dora, aged eighteen. I was very fond of my cousin Kate, because, through her, I found myself frequently with Dora Polehampton, the jolliest, the plumpest, freshest, prettiest, daringest, darlingest, most impudent little piece of feminine creation that ever danced the Lancers, or rode to hounds. The fact was, I was head-over-heels in love with Dora, but was too bashful to confess my affection, and ask her to accept my hand and heart. Of course, I assisted at the decorations. There was only one other member of my sex, a big horsey-fellow, arrived that day, on a visit to the Rector's, and I left him to attend to the requirements of the six other girls, while I devoted my attention to cousin Kate and Dora. Kate, however, was only a matter of form; it was Dora who commanded my every movement, my every thought, and my every glance, as I handed her up crosses and triangles. I nailed up the devices and garlands that her hands had fashioned. I assisted her to mount the steps to adjust the designs upon the gaselier. I pricked my hands in selecting suitable pieces of holly for her. I raced round the church-yard in search of yew and laurels—in short, I was her slave. But I looked forward to my reward; yes, we were all to go up to the Rectory when our labours were finished, and before I left I was determined to pluck up courage, and know my fate. I had reserved inside my hat a dainty sprig of mistletoe, and I was resolved at all hazards to claim its privileges, and to gather honey from my beloved Dora's cheeks. At last we were done. The aisles were swept; furs, cloaks, and wraps were brought from the vestry, the ladies carefully protected from the cold, and we prepared to depart. We looked upon our work, and were well pleased. Every pillar, beam, and rod was hidden beneath evergreens with their berries, whose hues were in beautiful harmony with the fine dark

colour of the old oak pews. Only the altar and font remained to be finished, and fresh flowers were to be brought for them in the morning. I offered to see all was securely fastened and lock the front door. By the time I had done this, the rest had cleared out, and I found Kate waiting for me in the porch. We soon caught up the others, but I had no chance of Dora's society, for she was in close *tête-à-tête* with the "other fellow," and my natural bashfulness kept me from intruding. However, my jealousy was awakened, and I watched that "other fellow" for the rest of the evening with great suspicion.

You can imagine my astonishment when, directly we got indoors, I saw him, before the whole company, kiss my beloved under the mistletoe as if he had my right to do so, and she seemed to enjoy it. I had half a mind to step forward and follow his example, and, for the rest of the evening, keep Dora to myself; but I was too bashful. The only words I could say to her before I left were, "Good night." On our way home I enquired of Kate who "that jockey-looking, upstart was." My defeat was complete when she answered, "Why, don't you know. That is Dora's young man."

You could have knocked me down with your little finger. I was beaten, betrayed, and utterly forlorn. I did not go to Church on Christmas morning, and returned to town on Boxing Day, without saying "Adieu" to my lost love.

* * * * *

I hear someone ask what has all this to do with my title. I have been forgetting. That fellow's name was Alfred Berry. I go to my desk and unearth two cards, tied with some white satin ribbon, that have lain there nearly nine years, on them I read "Mr. A. Berry," "Mrs. A. Berry."





ENGLISH MEN OF LETTERS.

SHELLEY.

JT would have been nothing very extraordinary though Shelley had been still alive; so far, that is, as a man and his human life may be judged from an ordinary estimate. Had he been living now, the poet would have been considerably younger than many people one knows, whose years, moreover, do not of themselves necessarily indicate a speedy close of life. Shelley would have been, by this time, an old man, certainly, but he would not have been much older than Mr. Carlyle, who can still travel to Scotland when he is inclined, or write letters to the newspapers on current politics. Then it was only the other day that one, whose vigorous manhood was contemporary with Shelley's, passed away in the gifted and interesting Barry Cornwall. Mr. R. H. Horne is still active, though full of years, and both Mr. P. J. Bailey and Sir Henry Taylor virtually belong to the generation that knew Shelley. He would have been eighty-five, or thereby, had he lived to the present year, which indeed has seen David Laing pass away at just that patriarchal age. Yet it is wearing on to sixty years since Shelley's tragic end, while biographers and critics have long been busy with himself and his writings, and the antiquaries are now engaged with probable relics of his furniture.

For over half a century, then, the question has been agitated as to Shelley's place as a poet. It has generally been allowed that he was a man of no ordinary power; while a few have studied him faithfully, and a majority, as usual, has given a verdict in utter ignorance of the merits of the

case. He has been overrated and he has been underrated, belauded and maligned, feared, and worshipped, and misrepresented. As usual, those that condemn him most readily, and most thoroughly, are those that know least about him ; while it must be added that among his warmest admirers are those whose admiration is challenged by the wrong things, or is pitched in a falsetto key. All this indicates that there must be something more than ordinary about Shelley—something that raises him quite out of and above the crowd of human agents, and something that makes him peculiar even among English men of letters. It is not a common thing to find a number of able thinkers puzzling themselves, and starting theories, and making mistakes soon to be rectified—condemning, and praising, and excusing, and expounding—all in connection with a mere soldier in life's great battle, who has fought the usual fight and got done with it. Shelley must have been an uncommon man before his personality should postulate such an uncommon interest, and give rise to so much criticism, at once tentative, warm, and contradictory. We seem to have got at the right distance from him to warrant something like a definite estimate of his vital worth : of what he was in himself, and what he did for literature. Yet, as has already been said, the poet, in the matter of length of years, might still have been with us ; and it is a fact that Captain Trelawny, who was one of the close companions of his last days, is not only still alive, but has this year re-written the book containing his impressions of Shelley and Byron.

At the very outset, then, the difficulty meets us, as to whether it is altogether fair to judge of Shelley from what it was given him to do in his short span of thirty years. When we think of what other eminent men might have been had they died so young—Chaucer, Milton, Wordsworth, Scott, even Shakspeare himself—we are inclined to pause before giving judgment. Chaucer, without his *Canterbury Tales* ; Milton, with no *Paradise Lost* ; Thomas Carlyle, merely as a translator and biographical essayist, were indeed but striplings compared with the men when displaying their full complement of results. Had Shelley, too, lived even to

the threescore years of Chaucer, what, with his enormous assimilative faculty, his singular introspective power, his strength of creative energy, might he not have done ? Judging from *Prometheus Unbound* and the *Cenci*, it seems not an unfair inference to make that Shelley, with matured and disciplined experience, had it in him to stand abreast of the foremost Elizabethans. On the other hand, however, it is impossible to overlook the nature of his unique development, as far as it went. He defies any convenient theory of averages ; he will not brook to be judged in relation to an ordinary criterion. It is quite possible to consider him middle-aged, in some respects, while just emerging from his teens, and to aver that his intellectual maturity was reached and over before his early death. Shelley, at twenty-two, had spiritual insight and grasp of understanding that might have served a superior nature at forty ; and Shelley, at twenty-nine, was as far from concentration of purpose, from sanity of outlook, and from practical sagacity as any schoolboy not utilised by Lord Macaulay.

On the score of great personal intensity and rapt enthusiasm for his ideal, of a certain frenzy of Platonic sentiment, and of bright and pure melodious expression, Shelley's death, before reaching the ordinary years of maturity, was a great blow to the literature of his country ; but in so far as he seemed likely to add dignity to the national poetry, to furnish fresh æsthetic material, or to contribute a new impulse to social regeneration, the poet seemed to have done his best and his worst. As a worker in poetic transcendentalism he had probably not reached perfection ; as an individual he might have grown and expanded for those about him and directly concerned with his character and conduct, while it is hardly probable that his general influence would have gained by length of days. Even on the "unworldly" hypothesis of his admirers, this seems a perfectly legitimate conclusion to draw ; for, if a man at thirty has no better sociological theories than Shelley had, when, indeed, is he likely to have them ? The truth appears to be, that if the poet is not to be charged with moral insanity, he must be let off with social puerility and a marvellous poetic licence.

Mr. Symonds, from the lofty æsthetical standpoint he takes, along with other devotees, bewails and condemns the attitude of some of the leading critics among Shelley's contemporaries, but in doing so he overlooks the fact that critics, even when considering poetry, deal with assumed human beings, and not with essential or possible demigods. How should a *Quarterly Reviewer*, in reading *Queen Mab* or *Laon and Cythnia*, be in a position to know that the author was not amenable to average social law, to say nothing of civilization or common decency? It is all very well after the lapse of sixty years to reduce moral chaos within the elastic stretch and grasp of a fine frenzy; it is quite a different thing to feel that it may taint existing conditions to the core. Were it not that idealism, even of the kind in which Shelley revels, stands so greatly in need of commonplace material and outward symbols, it might be possible for happy majorities to rejoice in it; but as matters stand there is no denying that it is quite beyond the æsthetic attainment of the average Englishman. And thus if Shelley's supreme reverence for liberty was likely to develope in the direction it had steadily held for years, there seems no harshness to his memory in saying that the world had quite enough of it. As a social reformer the poet was not likely to have much success, even if privileged with a length of days that would have classed him with the oldest patriarch. In so far as he advocated a theory of liberty, Shelley may safely be put to one side as unprofitable, and what remains of him for consideration will be the life he led and the poetry he wrote.

Now both are so bound up with his theories that it is difficult to consider them apart. It is not possible, for instance, to defend his treatment of his first wife, and there are features in all his leading poems which would seem to be beyond the reach of even the tenderest generosity. Mr. Symonds, though an ardent admirer, is not quite a blind devotee of the poet, and he is willing to admit that extraordinary enthusiasm and imperfect experience may have induced outrageous blunders. In reference to the painful circumstances connected with Harriet, he looks from a much

loftier and manlier standpoint than, for example, Mr. W. M. Rosetti, whose attempted palliation of the poet's conduct is nothing short of vulgar bravado; but Mr. Symonds, also, is just too anxious to overlook the patent facts of the case. He is very hopeful that a statement yet to be made will shed an entirely new light upon the matter, if not, indeed, wholly exculpate the apparently erring husband. An ordinary on-looker cannot but wonder that such extenuating account has not been made long ere now. Harriet could hardly be made worse than partial biographers have already made her, and there is certainly room for brightening the memory of Shelley. In a word, if such things in the lives of great men are to be discussed at all, they must be brought to the bar of common sense, and estimated according to recognised social law. Little good can be done by such criticisms as those, on the one hand, of Dr. Johnson and De Quincey respecting Milton and Goethe, or those of Mr. Swinburne and Mr. Michael Rosetti touching Byron and Shelley, on the other. Readers of what the poets have left would rather dispense with such special pleading, and, indeed (were it possible), forget the untoward facts altogether. Mr. Symonds, in his narrative, has succeeded in fairly establishing one thing, and that is, that, so far as can be made out, the first Mrs. Shelley was not an unworthy wife of her extraordinary husband. He has also shewn that, through the poet's incessant quest after a Fair Ideal, even the second wife was perilously near a crisis. But the poet's mind was disabused in time, and circumstances favoured a return to comparative sanity.

All this would not be worth dwelling on at all, were it not connected more or less intimately, with Shelley's poetry. For, after all, that is the main thing about the man of vita interest to this and all coming generations. If he has left anything worth reading; if it is safe to read it; if our wives and sisters could profit by the study of it, as well as ourselves; if, in short, he has contributed to literature anything that is worth preserving, then by all means let due credit be given. We are probably, at present, just too much inclined to philosophise over our men of letters. *Æsthetic*

criticism is prone to discover what was never from the first in the writer's intention: it starts with a theory, and speedily turns out, by a process of ingenious reconciliation, a beautiful symmetrical unity. This habit has become so inveterate, that there seems a risk of great ancients shading off into sun-myths, and criticism toning down into a system of ideas. Now Shelley would make a prime sun-myth, and his poems could be made to encompass him with varying degrees of splendour, till the aggregate glory would be of a kind not to be approached by ordinary methods of interpretation. Meanwhile, however, there are readers of verse to whom such æsthetical considerations are unpalatable, and there are very many others to whom they are as nothing and vanity. What is to be done with these in presence of work like Shelley's? They will undoubtedly come to the conclusion that his tone is oft-times depraved, and his ethics unwholesome, and it will be extremely difficult for even the ablest apologist to prove them wrong. Mr. Symonds says that the poet's theories about individual liberty took such hold of him, that, in his ardent advocacy, he went to the extremes that in his heart of hearts he had no desire to defend. That may have been, but if it is the case it simply emphasises the charge of puerility and inexperience that comes so readily to hand against Shelley. If he was so innocent as not to know that others besides himself took an interest in social problems, then perhaps he was warranted in giving poetic shape to thoughts that will, on the first blush, challenge the contempt they deserve. Some of his finest poetry is so sadly tainted that it will not bear reading except by professed students of verse, while it is only fair to add that it is quite an education in numbers to listen to his firm well-defined beat, and an elevation of soul to be held spell-bound by his harmonies. Let any-one read, for instance, the first fifteen stanzas of the first canto of the *Revolt of Islam*, and say whether the man that provided such work—such a sweep of landscape, such depth of colour, such ease and breadth of detail and distance of perspective—were or were not a poetical maker of wholly exceptional calibre and resource!

" And now 'tis like all instruments,
Now like a lonely flute ;
And now it is an angel's voice,
That bids the heavens be mute ! "

But let the same reader advance though the poem, and the likelihood will be that, if he appreciates the poetic beauty aright, he will regret that it should have been, through moral perversity, little other than thrown away. It is a pity that so much of Shelley's poetry should illustrate the incongruous union of "Beauty and the Beast." For, whatever a poet may be advocating, he is fully entitled to his own opinion so long as he does not insult the native dignity of manhood. The day has gone past for condemning a man's philosophy of aesthetics, simply because he is of a different political creed from his critic, but the time is surely yet far distant—nay, hopelessly remote, when he shall be hailed as a public benefactor who shall glorify Catiline's young men, or advocate the universal reign of Circe. At this point, then, it is necessary to draw a sharp line in reference to Shelley. Mr. Symonds acknowledges this, and what he says is very much to the point. He carefully distinguishes his purely poetical quality, from his attitude as a theorist, though indeed he is somewhat lenient in his detailed criticism. But few will demur to such a general estimate as the following, when they recall the lyrical of the *The Skylark* and *The Cloud*, of the *Ode to the West Wind*, and the *Lines Written among the Euganean Hills*, as well the majesty of movement that characterises the larger works, apart from the question of their substantial and theoretical value. "In range of power," says Mr. Symonds, "he was also conspicuous above the rest. Not only did he write the best lyrics, but the best tragedy, the best translations, and the best familiar poems of his century.

- As a satirist and humorist, I cannot place him so high as some of his admirers do ; and the purely polemical portions of his poems, those in which he puts forth his antagonism to tyrants and religions, and custom in all its myriad forms, seem to me to degenerate at intervals into poor rhetoric." In the *Adonais*, which is in many respects so tender and

sweet and touching, there is much that draws one to Shelley in an attitude of respectful affection. There is singular pathos—a note that reaches the finer chords of emotion—is that implied wail for sympathy that strikes through the stanzas on himself.

“ ’Midst others of less note came one frail form,
A phantom among men, companionless
As the last cloud of an expiring storm
Whose thunder is its knell. He, as I guess,
Had gazed on Nature’s naked loveliness.
Actæon-like; and now he fled astray
With feeble steps o’er the world’s wilderness,
And his own thoughts along that rugged way,
Pursued like raging hounds their father and their prey.”

THOMAS BAYNE.



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